

The ABILITY LINK



Group Photo of disABILITY LINK/AAPD Summer Interns

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@disabilitylink

www.disabilitylink.org

**Advocating for human rights,
not special rights**



Empowering Our Youth

This summer was our best summer program yet. We had a total of 17 students at any given time covering 5 counties, as well as Atlanta public school system. The students ranged in ages from 14 to 22. The summer program included a variety of new activities. Some of the activities included riding para-transit and visiting the Georgia Library for Accessible Service's. We also heard from a nutrition specialist and driving expert for those who have a disability. In addition, if that wasn't enough, the students became CPR certified! It was a fun-filled empowering our youth summer program with the learning skills they will need to transition from high school to adulthood. We discussed everything from budgets, to bullying, to transportation, to social skills, and so much more. The students built long-lasting friendships as well as the confidence to go out into the world and live the life they want.

Article by Garrick Scott



Picture Description: disABILITY LINK's Staff and students from the summer program

Annual Family & Friends Picnic

There was a full house at July 12 Family and Friends Picnic.

The disABILITY LINK annual community picnic had over 100 people coming together to enjoy food, fun, and friendship.

Consumers, families, advocates, and friends joined the staff in singing karaoke, playing games and spending time together. Food included hot dogs, an extensive array of homemade side dishes, and desserts.

Fellow nonprofit, The Frazer Center, joined the picnic with around 15 adults from day program. Several of them took home prizes from the ongoing raffle throughout the event. David Freels won the 50/50 raffle.

Licensed massage therapist Mina Richie, who performs massage for both people and horses, offered free chair massages in the fitness room.

The two-hour picnic is one of four annual events hosted by disABILITY LINK throughout the year.

The next community event, "Doggie Days," is October 5th and will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Decatur First Baptist Church. The day will celebrate our furry friends as service, companion, and beloved pets. Animals are welcome on a leash or in harness and guests will enjoy food from vendors, silent auction, children's activities, and a blessing of the animals.

For more information about Doggie Days, or the annual end-of-year consumer appreciation picnic, to be held at the Decatur Recreation Center on Dec. 12, please contact Lisa Parks at 404-687-8890, ext. 125 or lparks@disabilitylink.org

Article by Lisa Parks

NCIL Conference

The National Council on Independent Living (<https://www.ncil.org/>) has the mission to, “advance independent living and the rights of people with disabilities. NCIL envisions a world in which people with disabilities are valued equally and participate fully.” Each year NCIL hosts a conference for people associated with Centers for Independent Living (CILs), Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs) and other independent living organizations.

For the past two years, the disABILITY LINK/American Association of People with Disabilities Summer Internship Program has included attendance at the NCIL conference. Traveling to Washington DC to participate in a conference is exciting enough, and the interns look forward to the opportunity, but once they have attended the conference, just like many of us before them, they recognize that we are all part of the national (and sometimes international) disability community and say things such as, “I did not realize until now that I am part of something much bigger than my own personal experience,” and, “Being here helps me to understand how I am connected to other members of the disability community.”

The NCIL conference has all the usual elements of conferences, key note speakers, workshops and awards events, and it has more unique aspects including a Disability Rights March to and Rally at the Capitol, and visits with legislators. Imagine hundreds of people with disabilities marching the two plus miles down Pennsylvania Avenue from the hotel to the Capitol, holding signs, waving at the crowds, chanting disability rights slogans and taking grassroots advocacy to the streets, there was an enormous sense of community and personal pride that the rain could not extinguish. At the Rally, Congressional members and Independent Living leadership addressed the crowds and highlighted the issues that are accomplishments of the community, and the barriers to full participation.

Then the serious work began, visiting elected representatives to educate from our personal experience of the disability community. The group from Georgia visited all 14 Congressional Members and 2 Senators representing the state, for some that meant an hour meeting with the Representative themselves, for others it meant 10 minutes with legislative staff. Whatever the type of meeting, so few citizens communicate with our legislators, never mind meet with them or their staff, that we know this is important work.

The interns from the Summer Internship Program report highlights from the conference included; meeting members of the delegation from Centers for Independent Living in Japan; meeting elected officials; spending time with the interns at AAPD Internship Program based in Washington DC; workshops and other activities that helped create a bigger picture of disability; and having the responsibilities of being a volunteer and part of a group that made a difference.

The conference ended with a screening of "Piss on Pity: The Story of ADAPT," (<http://www.advocacymonitor.com/piss-on-pity-the-story-of-adapt/>) and a big party, an opportunity to spent time with our fellow members of the disability community. The dance floor was packed with people (with disability labels and experiences of all kinds) celebrating life and the companionship of the disability community. The conference was demanding and tiring, as many worthwhile activities often are, but also fulfilling and nurturing. There are photos of many aspects of the conference (including photos of those of us from Georgia who were fortunate enough to attend) at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/101273671@N02/albums/72157710134358426/page1>, and independent living information of all kinds at <http://www.advocacymonitor.com/>.

Article by Linda Pogue

Picture Description:

Linda Pogue with the
disABILITY LINK/AAPD
summer interns:
Evan McKenzie
Jake Key
Kamau McKie
Brittany O'Neal
Shikha Desai
Nicole Elmabruok



disABILITY LINK and American Association of People with Disabilities Summer Internship program.

This summer we had the pleasure of hosting six students for disABILITY LINK/AADP 10 week summer internship. The summer program ran from May 28th, 2019 to August 2nd, 2019. The students had the opportunity to intern with DeKalb District Attorney, Atlanta Legal Aid, City Of Clarkston, and GLASS: Georgia Library for Accessible and Atlanta Regional Commission. As a part of their internship curriculum the student's visited several historical sites including: The Dr Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, Center for Civil and Human Rights, and The Georgia Radio Reading Service to gain their Knowledge of Civil rights. One of the highlights of the student's internship program was they attended the National Council on Independent Living Annual Conference in Washington DC. The students were able to get a better understanding of disability rights, advocacy, and the importance of networking. All students were able to build new partnerships and gain a better understanding of their career paths. During the graduation ceremony, the students provided wonderful presentations about their host sites, knowledge gained, and things they would take with them as they journey into their careers path. We are so proud of each one of them! We are excited to continue to provided opportunities support to College students in the coming school year. We thank AAPD for their continued support along with the Coca-Cola Foundation.



Article by Miriam DeJesus

Picture Description:

disABILITY LINK/AADP
summer interns

Jake Key

Shikha Desai

Kamau McKie

Nicole Elmabruok

Evan McKenzie

Brittany O'Neal

&

standing inside

disABILITY LINK's Office

Disability, Diversity and Intersectionality in Centers for Independent Living

Intersectionality refers to the interconnected nature of race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. with disability. This also describes how people with these marginalized identities experience discrimination and violence. Recently CIL-Net alongside of NCIL (National Council on Independent Living) and ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization) held a National On-location training in Atlanta that provided information on the findings of the Disability, Diversity, and Intersectionality (DDI) study. The DDI study was originally conducted to identify promising practices in Centers for Independent Living. Findings showed that people of color with disabilities are still experiencing injustice, discrimination, and violence at alarming rates.

The training gave insight on intersectionality as a framework that describes the unique experiences of people that live with multiple marginalized identities. Centers from all over the country came together to learn of strategies of increasing their diversity and intersectionality. Through collaborative efforts, teambuilding activities, and role play we all explored the elements of our Centers for Independent Living that make it welcoming, safe, as well as inclusive for all consumers.

One of the most powerful moments in the training came in the form of debate about the question, "How does Privilege exist?" That question served as Segway to the very nature of the Training itself. How may Centers for Independent Living systematically address disability, diversity, and intersectionality through structures, policies, practices, norms, and values?

All who were in attendance of the training had no choice but to imagine expanding beyond working only in the disability community. To consider the poorly paid, over diagnosed, victimized, and pushed aside women of color. To no longer ignore the fact that the majority of people with disabilities are also people who are low/no income, indigenous, people of color, immigrants, LGBTQIA, and more. Above all, we left with the knowledge and will to keep working towards advancement in equality for all.

Article by Jasmine McClain

Atlanta Braves Fundraiser Game

The Atlanta Braves fundraiser game is one of our yearly events that a lot of people look forward to. All the money raised goes back into the organization to help support our work and support the youth of disABILITY LINK.

The event is a great way to support our youth who are the driving force to our future. The event is not only a way to support the organization, but it provides an opportunity to join together and provide peer support in the community. It teaches skills to youth of how to plan for transportation to get to the game, planning of what accommodations may be needed, and socialization skills outside of the home and in the community. Even though the weather was hot you could feel the togetherness of staff, consumers, and all others that were in attendance.

The event was a great one and provided opportunities to all who were involved to really share information on our organization. I can't wait until next year to see how many more will join us!

Article by James Turner



Picture Description:
James Turner with
Danny at the Braves
fundraiser game

Family and Friends CPR

disABILITY LINK hosts events on safety and emergency preparedness on a quarterly basis. In August, we held a CPR class for consumers and staff called Family and Friends CPR.

Danny Menard, a Fireman who works for the DeKalb County Fire Department, instructed 18 individuals (staff and consumers) in CPR and what to do in an emergency. The class consisted of teaming up with another individual also called the buddy system to practice CPR. Prior to practicing CPR, a video was shown to prepare us for the steps to take when administering CPR. The video helped us to understand some of the "What ifs".

The class was informative and educational. Upon completion of the class we received a Certificate of Participation.

We look forward to hosting another CPR event in the future as well as topics on emergency preparedness. For more information about contact Darnell Johnson at [404-687-8890](tel:404-687-8890) or djohnson@disabilitylink.org.

Article by Darnell Johnson



Picture Description: Danny Menard and his assistant with Darnell Johnson, Juanita Anderson, and James Turner

Executive Director Message

“Work for a cause, not for applause. Live life to express, not to impress. Don’t strive to make your presence noticed, just make your absence felt.”

Every day I step into my office see this phrase that is emblazoned in large black letters on my wall. I find this statement to be powerful and philosophical.

During the many years that I have been with disABILITY LINK and in the Independent Living movement, I have witnessed times where people give from the heart and the passion of having basic civil rights. I’ve witnessed others provide peer support and advocacy that has touched people’s lives without a thought as to what they will get in return. I’ve witnessed the acts of generosity through monetary value and through volunteerism. All of these are true meanings of unselfishness.

I want to take this time to thank all of those who have donated both through volunteerism and through monetary donations. The gifts allow for disABILITY LINK to continue to make a presence in the community. It affords for opportunities to provide services to people with disabilities in the Metro Atlanta area. It is the mission of disABILITY LINK to be an organization led by and for people with disabilities and promotes choice and full participation in community life.

I encourage each of you to join in on making a difference either by donating or by volunteering. We have several ways to donate, just call or stop by our office for more information. We also have several volunteer opportunities including becoming a board member. Board members must attend a training. The next training is in October as well as elections.

I want to leave you with what I began with and that is simply to “Work for a cause, not for applause”.

Kim Gibson

Executive Director

You're a permanent part of the foundation for disABILITY LINK. We will miss you Larry Brown.

Happy Retirement



Picture Description: Kim Gibson with Larry Brown at his retirement party at disABILITY LINK's office





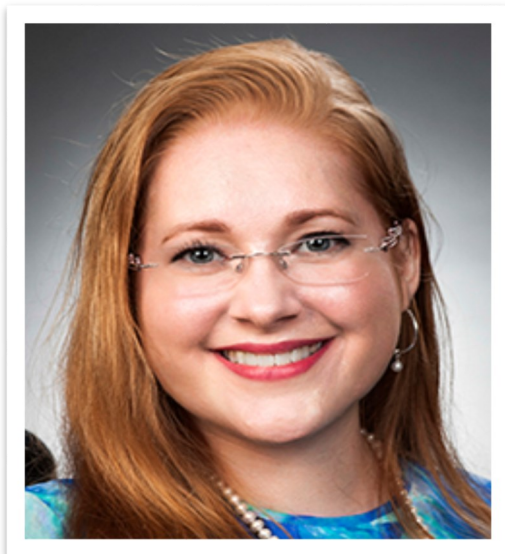
In Loving Memory



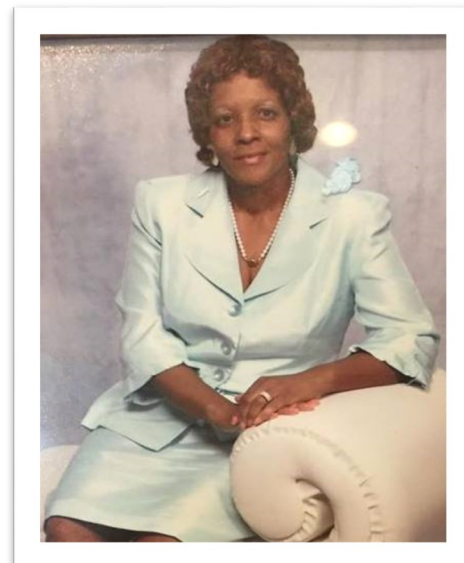
Deborah Lynn Patterson
Volunteer at disABILITY LINK



Marco Bristo
Disability Rights Advocate



Dawn Alford
GCDD, Disability Lobbyist,
and friend



Shirley Huff
Friend and Family of
disABILITY LINK

We have lost many disABILITY LINK Family and Friends this year. These are only a few listed. We honor all those who have passed.

zoom

We are excited to announce that all of our classes held at disABILITY LINK are available through video conferencing. To participate outside of disABILITY LINK office join in from your computer, cell phone or landline phones. Webcams are not required but can be used for participation.

Join from a PC, Mac, Linux, iOS, or Android: <https://zoom.us/j/4046878890>

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +16465588656,4046878890#

Or Telephone:

US: +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 404 687 8890

Or by going to <https://zoom.us/> and click on join a meeting. Meeting ID is 404-687-8890. Please note: All video conferencing is recorded. You can join in without signing up.

For additional information and accommodations please contact our office.

Please Note: Our computer lab is open every Monday-Thursday from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm.



Please review the following list of dates for office hours, annual events, and office closings.

Normal Business Hours

Mon. – Thurs. 8:30 AM-4:30 PM

Fridays by appointment only

Upcoming Events

October 5-(Saturday) Doggie Day-10:00 pm-2:00 pm

December 12-(Thursday) Annual Consumer Appreciation Party-11:00 am-1:00 pm

For more information contact our office at

404-687-8890

We are closed on the following dates:

November 5 Election Day

November 11.....Veteran’s Day



Wish List:

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
Laptops	3
Youth Sponsorships	2

Youth Support for conferences – please contact staff for information!

Contact Us:

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