

The ABILITY LINK



disABILITY LINK Quarterly Newsletter

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Picture descriptions:

Shown is a group photo of the disABILITY LINK staff at our annual Consumer Appreciation Party

Social Media



@disabilitylink



**disABILITY
LINK**
the center for rights & resources

Edited and Designed by Cinque Singleton, Social Media Specialist

Transportation Advocacy and Options

disABILITY LINK plays a critical role in the lives of individuals with disabilities by connecting them to essential resources that promote independence and inclusion. One of the most vital yet often overlooked services is accessible transportation. For many, transportation is more than just getting from one place to another—it's the key to participating fully in everyday life.

Access to reliable, accessible transit means the difference between isolation and opportunity. It allows individuals to attend job interviews, maintain employment, go to healthcare appointments, and engage in community activities. Without it, independence becomes nearly impossible to sustain. That's why disABILITY LINK places such a strong emphasis on transportation access as a cornerstone of independent living.

MARTA Mobility, the paratransit service provided by the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, is an essential resource for many of disABILITY LINK's consumers. This door-to-door service enables individuals who cannot use fixed-route public transportation to move about the community freely and with dignity. For people with disabilities, it ensures access to employment, healthcare, recreation, and vital social connections.

disABILITY LINK plays an active role in supporting consumers with MARTA Mobility. We provide quarterly transportation training to help individuals understand how the service works, how to schedule rides, and what their rights are as paratransit riders. In addition, we assist consumers with the entire application process—from gathering necessary documentation to submitting the forms and preparing for the required in-person assessments. This hands-on support helps remove barriers and ensures that more individuals can take full advantage of the service.

MARTA Mobility offers more than just a ride—it offers freedom. Consumers use the service to attend job training programs, work shifts, and medical appointments, as well as to participate in recreational, cultural, and educational activities. This kind of reliable, accessible transportation fosters a greater sense of independence and allows individuals with disabilities to engage fully in society.

Cont. on next page

Transportation Advocacy and Options Cont.

Beyond individual support, disABILITY LINK also engages in systems advocacy, working to improve policies and infrastructure that affect accessible transportation. By raising awareness and pressing for change at both the local and state levels, disABILITY LINK aims to build a transportation system that is truly inclusive of all community members.

Accessible transportation is a basic human right. Through continued advocacy, training, and direct support, disABILITY LINK remains committed to ensuring that people with disabilities have the tools and services they need to live independently and thrive.

For more information on Transportation or to apply for Marta Mobility contact **James Turner** at jturner@disabilitylink.org or **Kevin Randle** at Krandle@disabilitylink.org



Photo Description: Shown is an individual in a wheelchair, getting on Marta Mobility ramp to get onto the bus.

Article by James Turner

Days of Advocacy: Our Voices, Our Vote

disABILITY LINK's Days of Advocacy: Our Voices, our Vote at the Georgia State Capitol, held on January 30, February 27, and March 27, provided an invaluable platform for individuals with disabilities to advocate for their rights and needs. These events focused on critical issues such as healthcare, employment, housing, and transportation, allowing our consumers to directly engage with legislators and share their personal stories. Each session offered a powerful opportunity for participants to educate lawmakers on the challenges they face and the importance of policies that support accessibility, inclusion, and independence. From discussing waivers and healthcare in January, to employment opportunities in February, and transportation and housing in March, the conversations were driven by the real-life experiences of those directly impacted by these issues.

In addition to advocating on key topics, our Days of Advocacy equipped participants with leadership and advocacy skills, helping them navigate the Capitol and communicate effectively with legislators. This direct engagement not only raised awareness but also built strong relationships with lawmakers, hopefully leading to increased funding and protective legislation for the disability community.

These advocacy days are vital for creating a more inclusive and accessible society. They unite the disability community, empowering individuals to advocate for themselves and drive meaningful change. By prioritizing these events, developing clear advocacy messages, and building strong legislative relationships, disABILITY LINK continues to play a crucial role in shaping a more equitable future.

We are proud of the leadership shown by all our advocates and look forward to continuing this work. If you missed the event or want to learn how you can get involved in future advocacy efforts, please reach out to me at jkey@disabilitylink.org. Together, we can ensure our voices are heard and our needs are met.



Photos Description: A group of individuals posing on the stairs in the Georgia Capital. Behind them is the stairs with individuals walking up and down the stairs.

Article by Jake Key

SenseAbility Showcase

On January 29, disABILITY LINK hosted the SenseAbility Showcase, an event aimed at raising awareness about resources and services for individuals who are Blind, Deaf, and Deaf-Blind.

In partnership with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA), the event was a great success, with attendees learning about the latest assistive technologies and services that enhance independence and accessibility. Throughout the day, participants had the opportunity to engage with technology demos, connect with service providers, and attend interactive sessions on important topics like legal rights and advocacy.

These sessions provided practical insights on achieving greater independence, and the event fostered a strong sense of community among attendees. The SenseAbility Showcase was more than just a resource fair—it was a day of empowerment and collaboration. It was inspiring to witness individuals and families connect, share experiences, and leave with new knowledge and hope.

We're grateful to everyone who attended and contributed to making the event such a success. As we look ahead, disABILITY LINK remains committed to supporting individuals with disabilities and creating a more inclusive community. If you missed the event and would like more information about the resources available—or if you have any questions—feel free to reach out to **Sky Cochran** at lcochran@disabilitylink.org.



Photo Description: Three staff from GVRA sitting on one side of a table with a blue table cloth talking to an individual wearing a yellow top and green pants. Aside that is Juanita Anderson walking towards the camera. In the background is disABILITY LINK's activity room.

Article by Sky Cochran

Peer Support Training

In February, disABILITY LINK had the privilege of partnering with the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind (AIDB) to host a three-day Peer Support Training in Decatur, Alabama. Led by Linda Pogue and cohosted by me, Jake Key, the training brought together blind and visually impaired leaders from across Alabama who are involved in peer support groups or lead groups that focus on individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The event aimed to equip them with essential skills to effectively support and lead their communities.

The training covered a range of crucial topics, including active listening, problem-solving, building trust, and creating inclusive environments within peer groups. We focused on practical strategies to help participants facilitate group discussions, manage group dynamics, and address common challenges faced by individuals with visual disabilities. This interactive experience allowed participants to practice communication and advocacy skills in a supportive, hands-on setting.

A key aspect of the training was the emphasis on empowerment. We encouraged leaders to share their personal stories, highlighting the power of lived experiences in creating a strong, supportive peer network. Through these exchanges, participants were able to connect on a deeper level, building relationships that will continue to support their work long after the training ended.

By the end of the three days, participants had gained valuable tools to lead their peer support groups with confidence. The training not only fostered personal growth but also strengthened the collective commitment to enhancing the lives of individuals who are blind or visually impaired throughout Alabama. The Peer Support Training in Decatur was a resounding success, and we're excited about the impact these newly trained leaders will have in their communities.

At disABILITY LINK, we're committed to continuing to provide resources and opportunities that empower individuals with disabilities. If you're interested in learning more about upcoming training sessions or peer support programs, please reach out to **Jake Key** at jkey@disabilitylink.org.

Article by Jake Key

State House Resolution

On April 18th, 2025, Marvin Lim "State Representative" presented disABILITY LINK a RESOLUTION on behalf of the Georgia House of Representatives!

This recognizes and commends disABILITY LINK for our exceptional service to the disability community in metro Atlanta and the entire State of Georgia. Hats off to our amazing Executive Director and Staff!

We are so proud and grateful for this recognition! You can read the full resolution here: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69184>
If you have any questions—feel free to reach out to **Cinque Singleton** csingleton@disabilitylink.org.



Photo Description: Representative Lim holding the Resolution alongside Kim Gibson. Standing behind them are members of the staff.



Photo Description: Kim Gibson and Representative Marvin Lim holding the Resolution

Article by Cinque Singleton

disABILITY LINK MARCHES IN SOLIDARITY AT THE MLK Parade

On January 20, disABILITY LINK was proud to join the community in celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. Day by participating in the annual MLK Day Parade in downtown Atlanta. The parade was an important opportunity for the disability community to stand in solidarity with Dr. King's vision of equality and justice for all, and we were honored to be part of the celebration.

The event kicked off with lineup at 1:15 PM at the corner of Peachtree and Ellis Street, with the parade officially beginning at 1:45 PM. Dr. King's message was echoed as hundreds of individuals from across Atlanta gathered to march together in honor of his legacy.

This year, disABILITY LINK was proud to have a presence in the parade, with participants proudly representing the diverse and vibrant disability community. For us, the march wasn't just a celebration—it was an act of empowerment. We showed up to demonstrate our commitment to inclusion, equality, and social justice for people of all abilities.

The MLK Day Parade was a time for reflection on how far we've come as a society, but also a reminder of how much further we still have to go in ensuring equal rights and opportunities for individuals with disabilities. As we marched, we were reminded that Dr. King's dream of a just society applies to everyone.



Photo Description: disABILITY LINK holding a disABILITY LINK banner. Behind them are other organizations holding their own banners. All marching in MLK Day parade

Article by William Thomas

Executive Director Message

Dear Friends:

Spring is a time of renewal and momentum—and there is certainly a lot happening across our organization and in the broader disability community.

This year has brought a wave of change, especially at the federal level. With the recent shifts at the **Administration for Community Living (ACL)**, many of us are navigating uncertainty about what lies ahead. While the future of certain programs and funding streams remains in question, our mission remains clear: **to advocate, empower, and stand beside people with disabilities every single day.**

We're also witnessing **increasing attacks on critical disability rights protections, including Section 504**, which have sparked serious concern across our community. In response, we've been deeply engaged in advocacy efforts to defend these hard-won rights and ensure that the voices of people with disabilities remain front and center in every conversation. Now more than ever, **our collective advocacy matters**—and we thank each of you for your continued involvement and commitment.

As we look toward the coming months, we're excited for all the opportunities to connect and celebrate together. Our **Annual Event on April 26th** is just around the corner, and we can't wait to gather in community. Looking ahead to summer, we have fun events planned—from our **Consumer Appreciation Cookout**, to a **Braves game outing**, and so much more.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who makes this work possible. **Your sponsorships, donations, and ongoing support** allow us to keep fighting for justice, creating opportunities, and building inclusive spaces for all. Whether you join us for an event, share your story, or raise your voice for change—**you are a vital part of this movement.**

We invite you to stay connected, get involved, and be part of what's ahead.

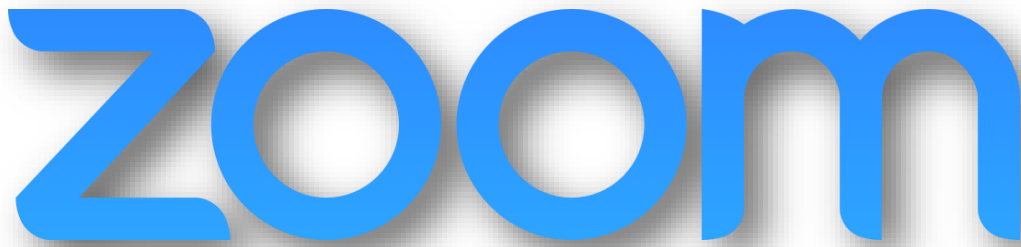
With appreciation,

Warm regards,

Kim Gibson, DSW, LMSW

Executive Director

Written by Kim Gibson



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://us02web.zoom.us/j/4046878890?pwd=dm9WTjA5aTBmMldscVplVTBqUzFSZz09>

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 and password is 1901. Please note: All video conferencing is recorded. You can join in without signing up.

For additional information and accommodations please contact our office.



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

Workshops

Join us through audio and/or video conferencing for all our workshops

Join us
From personal computer, cell phone or landlines
By calling 1-646-558-8656 or by going to
<https://zoom.us/> and click on join a meeting.

Meeting ID is
404-687-8890 & password is 1901

Holiday and Office Closures

May 26th, 2025 Memorial Day

June 19th, 2025 Juneteenth Day

June 30th through July 4th, 2025 Summer Break

September 1st, 2025 Labor Day



Our Funding comes from different sources including grants, foundations, and fee for service programs.

"Funding provided in part by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners under the guidance of the Department of Community Development."



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Wish List

We are continually trying to address needs of consumers and rely on contributions. Some needs include: ***Gym equipment (bike)**

***Laptops** * Meeting Supplies *Youth conference sponsorship

*Silent auction donations *art supplies *and much more

Consider donating to our general funding for all our programs

<https://disabilitylink.betterworld.org/donate>

***Please note that BetterWorld offers an option to donate towards their platform, which does not go to disABILITY LINK. This is separate from the processing fee. If you do not wish to contribute to the BetterWorld platform, make sure to uncheck the donation box.**

Contact Us:

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404-687-8890 Voice

404-381-8117 Video

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www.disabilitylink.org



disABILITY LINK is an application site for SNAP (Federal Nutrition Assistance program) and Georgia Access CDO for Healthcare. If you would like to learn more about SNAP or Georgia Access and to be screened for eligibility, or to apply for benefits. Please contact our office at 404-687-8890 or visit our office.