People with Disabilities, Employment & the American Dream

Cover Story, p. 5
The University of Michigan Model Spinal Cord Injury Care System provides comprehensive services for everyone with a spinal cord injury (SCI) during and after hospitalization — from inpatient care to outpatient rehabilitation, community reintegration and living effectively with SCI. For more than 20 years, we have been working with the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living (AACIL) to address independent living needs including employment.

We’re an integral part of the U-M Health System’s state-of-the-art service program for people with SCI, conducting innovative research and engaging in a variety of information sharing and outreach activities.
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Finding employment when you have a disability is a greater challenge than trying to find the curb cuts that allow you to cross the street in a wheelchair. People with disabilities have a 35 percent employment rate (including those who work part-time), as compared to 78 percent of those without disabilities, according to a 2004 Harris poll.

Employment gives hope and the protection of income. Working should be a right—not a privilege. People with disabilities need this basic right extended to them.

Remember, as much of the US population ages, we find that an increasing number of us have disabilities. Returning soldiers, suddenly disabled, are among those needing accessibility, training, and employment.

Today’s youth with disabilities want to look forward to a future of accessibility and employment.

Joan E. Smith, Board Chairperson
Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living

**President’s Desk**

We at the Ann Arbor CIL are proud of our history in Washtenaw, Livingston and Monroe Counties. We hope you will continue to support our work as we create a new, permanent home for the Center.

Don Anderson, a disability community pioneer, once said to me, “Jim, I really need to be more than what we are today—as a community of people with disabilities, we are only as disabled as we are poor!” Years later much of our work here at the CIL is focused on increasing the economic self-sufficiency of people with disabilities.

The single most important and constant voice that has guided me through my now 25 years at the helm of the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living comes directly from the members of our disability community. I have been and continue to be blessed with a wide variety of coaches, mentors, board members, staff and volunteers whose personal journey with disability has provided insight, strength and encouragement as we have, together, dedicated ourselves to the success of children, youth and adults with disabilities at home, at school, at work and in the community.

From Peg Ball and other pioneers of the Independent Living Movement, I have learned that living a successful life with a disability is an art cultivated through individual effort, information, and the support of others with similar experience. As an organization whose board of directors, staff and volunteers are composed of a majority of people with disabilities, we have embraced the importance of people with disabilities helping other people with disabilities. I have learned that this expression of human nature and disability culture is the cornerstone of who and what we are, both as individuals and as an organization.

Through peer advocacy and support, members of the disability community share information and adaptive techniques. Our community offers empathy, understanding and emotional support while demonstrating how to live life to its fullest through embracing both the gifts and challenges posed by disability.

Peer advocacy and support flourish in places where the disability community rallies for change, convenes to do business, or relaxes with food, entertainment, and recreation. Through peer advocacy and support we continue to build and strengthen our disability culture.

Our dream is to create “A Gathering Place” – “A Home of our Own” – a place where people with disabilities and our advocates come together to draw strength from each other as we work to make our world a better place.

I hope you enjoy our 19th edition of Access Magazine.

Jim Magyar, President & CEO
Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living

“Working should be a right—not a privilege.”

–Joan E. Smith

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CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

Youth Achieves his Dream as Radio Broadcaster

by Jennifer Chapin-Smith

Zach Damon realized his life-long dream of working for a commercial radio station in October 2006 when the internship he labored so hard to obtain turned into a career. Damon, 20, landed a job as a board operator and producer at Ann Arbor’s sports radio station WTKA 1050 AM.

“I’m trying to show that anyone can be a broadcaster; you just have to figure out how,” the Ann Arbor resident said.

Damon’s dream began when, as a five-year-old serving as an ambassador for the March of Dimes, he met NBC sportscaster Greg Gumble. Damon was born premature and has spastic diplegia cerebral palsy, hence his association with the March of Dimes.

Damon’s job at WTKA grew out of his summer 2006 internship there, which he scored by networking. Some family friends own a sports bar where a WTKA sales representative was eating. The friend got the WTKA program director’s contact information and gave it to Damon.

“Having a job gives people with disabilities power. Having a disability means I have the best of both worlds. Having a disability is a blessing: not everyone has that power to motivate people about life. That’s my reason for getting into broadcasting; it’s to educate people,” Damon said.

Damon underwent an unprecedented surgery on the bones of both legs just after graduating from Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor. It took him four-and-a-half months to recover.

“Having a job gives people with disabilities power. Having a disability means I have the best of both worlds. Having a disability is a blessing: not everyone has that power to motivate people about life. That’s my reason for getting into broadcasting; it’s to educate people,” Damon said.

During his teens, Damon served as a member of the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living’s Youth Council. “Not only do you get to make great friends, it teaches you leadership skills and gives you a new-found confidence to work with people,” Damon said. He also served as the master of ceremonies at the Ann Arbor CIL’s Walk and Roll annual fundraiser for three years.

“Zach would always share his ideas and make it a point to get everybody on board,” CIL Youth Services Coordinator Anna Dusbiber said of Damon’s time as a CIL Youth Council member. “He would also be good at fostering others’ ideas. He would always tell people about our program; he was good at marketing not only the Youth Council’s work but the CIL as a whole. It’s a great place to go to get the assistance you need.”
Damon hosts an internet radio show “Captain’s Corner” Wednesday afternoons on Orchard Radio, Washtenaw Community College’s internet radio station. He also hosts a weekly sports show “The Hot Seat” on CTN-TV Channel 17. Damon credits this CTN show, which he sees as an opportunity “to really promote Ann Arbor and say these are the kinds of things that are happening” with helping him land the internship interview.

During the four-month internship at WTKA, Damon set up interviews and appointments with celebrity guests, sent emails to find people to interview on the show, checked that commercials were recorded in the computer, and came up with the daily trivia question. His nickname at the radio station is Captain Steve, after retired Detroit Red Wings Captain Steve Yzerman.

“I’ve been able to meet a lot of really cool broadcasters [on the job],” Damon says. Damon is also a member of the Detroit Sports Broadcasters Association.

Damon hopes to step from radio into television, perhaps hosting his own late-night talk show one day. In the meantime, he’s working on a video for the March of Dimes’ Prematurity Awareness Month in November 2007 and focusing on his schooling.

“It’s all about education. I want to be the best,” explains Damon, who recently completed his sophomore year at Washtenaw Community College, majoring in visual arts, and plans to start at the University of Miami in

Florida spring semester 2008. The university is one of the ten best in the United States for broadcasting. Damon does not believe that his disability has negatively affected his career. “I believe that I’ve been able to show that I work hard. They know that I’m willing to work from the bottom up. I don’t expect to have my dream job dropped in my lap. There’s no elevator to success. You have to take the stairs,” he said.

Damon quotes his roommate as saying, “You’re not different. You just got something that makes you walk a little slower.”

“I’m just really grateful,” Damon explained. “I’m lucky to have all the opportunities I’ve had.”
The Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living (Ann Arbor CIL) seized the opportunity to cultivate the potential of people with disabilities and enable people with disabilities to serve their country by establishing the Ann Arbor CIL AmeriCorps*VISTA Community Partnership in 2002. This project has grown to include more than 25 VISTA volunteers, a majority of whom have disabilities, working for Centers for Independent Living and our community partners throughout Michigan.

As fundraisers, researchers, advocates, program coordinators, and information and resource developers, VISTAs at Centers for Independent Living work diligently to help create healthy, vibrant communities by developing the assets of community organizations and creating new products and projects that have not previously existed locally.

AmeriCorps*VISTA was one of a number of anti-poverty programs initiated by the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. This Act states that “it is, therefore, the policy of this Nation to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this Nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity. It is the purpose of the Act to strengthen, support, and coordinate effort in furtherance of that policy.”

Today, nearly 6,000 AmeriCorps*VISTA members serve throughout the United States to end illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, increase housing opportunities, bridge the digital divide, and strengthen the capacity of community organizations, according to the AmeriCorps*VISTA Website.

AmeriCorps*VISTA and the Ann Arbor CIL program also offer additional benefits that make community service as a VISTA an inviting prospect. For example, many people with disabilities rely heavily on the government aid they receive, including healthcare, to make it through the month. This dependence causes many people to forgo employment because they do not want to jeopardize their benefits. Fortunately, the pay structure of the AmeriCorps*VISTA program is such that the monthly stipend provided to each VISTA does not jeopardize their current government benefits.

“AMERICORPS*VISTA allows people with disabilities to SHOWCASE THEIR TALENTS AND ABILITIES.”

AMERICORPS Serves as the GATEWAY to EMPLOYMENT

by Alex Gossage
The Ann Arbor CIL’s disability-friendly environment allows people with disabilities to provide community service, while learning and growing during their AmeriCorps*VISTA experience. In fact, one of the primary reasons our program is successful in recruiting and cultivating people with disabilities is because we are so knowledgeable about the accommodations an employee with a disability might need and how to put those accommodations in place. Because of our expertise with disability, the Ann Arbor CIL’s AmeriCorps*VISTA program understands the needs of people with disabilities and can help to identify job accommodations when needed, such as flexible work schedules and assistive technology. Most importantly, AmeriCorps*VISTA has allowed people with disabilities to showcase their talents and abilities without being judged.

I am an example of a person with a disability who was given an opportunity, through AmeriCorps*VISTA, to prove myself and show that I can make substantial contributions to the success of my organization. I came to the Ann Arbor CIL following my graduation from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2004. Although I was born with Spina Bifida, a condition that has always affected my physical mobility, I had very little exposure to the greater disability community or the culture and experiences that frame this community. What I did know is that I wanted to help people, especially people with disabilities. I also felt that while I had virtually no experience working for community organizations, I had passion for this work and I had the capacity to learn and grow.

During the two years that I served as a VISTA, I researched potential sources of funding for the Ann Arbor CIL and assisted in the development and submission of grant proposals. As a VISTA I learned about project and program development from the initial steps of creating an idea to the final steps of writing proposals. Following my second year of VISTA service, I was one of a handful of VISTAs in our program who was offered a full-time position working at my office. Through our AmeriCorps*VISTA program I was able to learn, grow, and flourish by helping others and work in a nurturing and understanding environment, that gave me the opportunity to demonstrate my abilities without facing the stigma of my disability.
YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
A Terrific Employment Option

by Peg Ball

Starting a business is a challenge for anyone. So, is it even possible with the added complexities of disability? Absolutely!

A small business, especially one that is home-based, can be a terrific employment option for some people with disabilities. The challenges of daily transportation, arrangements for additional personal assistance services at a worksite and control of your environment can all be less complicated by working from home. With a home-based office, you can choose when to travel into the community.

The first step in starting a business is to weigh the pros and cons of being your own boss. While the idea may seem wonderful at first glance, it is important to remember the freedoms and the responsibilities that come with this level of self-determination. Besides having the freedom to set your own schedule, goals, and dress code, there are the responsibilities of finding and satisfying customers, handling taxes (and payroll if you hire employees), keeping records, buying supplies and equipment, and managing time effectively. If you do not have the personal resources to start up a business, applying to Michigan Rehabilitation Services for assistance might be the best next step.

Once you decide that your business idea and desire to work for yourself are strong enough to outweigh the challenges and hard work, some good advice is in order. In planning a business, it is wise to get input from those who’ve done it before.

Some good resources include the AACIL MicroEnterprise Works program or a local Small Business Development Center, such as the one at Washtenaw Community College or SCORE.

Another important resource for people who receive Social Security Disability (SSDI) or Supplemental Security (SSI) benefits is a PASS (Plan for Achieving Self Support). A PASS allows one to set aside income and/or resources toward a business goal without the risk of losing needed benefits for a period of time. If the business income has the potential of ultimately replacing the benefits, a PASS can be an excellent bridge from dependence on benefits to financial independence!

A business can be your path to independence. It is a path filled with adventure, hard work, and ultimately, great satisfaction!

“Once you decide that your business idea and desire to work for yourself are strong enough to outweigh the challenges and hard work, some good advice is in order.”
RESOURCES FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Michigan Rehabilitation Services in Ann Arbor
(734) 677-1125

Ann Arbor CIL
MicroEnterprise Works Program in Ann Arbor
(734) 971-0277
http://www.aacil.org/wwd_mew.shtml

Small Business Development Center at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor
(734) 547-9170
http://www.gvsu.edu/misbtdc/region12/or

SCORE in Ann Arbor
(734) 665-4433 x125
http://annarbor.score.org/

Michigan Rehabilitation Services’ PASS in Ann Arbor
(734) 677-1135
http://www.ssa.gov

“Ball is an expert at helping others maximize their abilities while honoring their disabilities.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peg Ball is a Life Coach certified by the Coach Training Alliance in Boulder, CO. She serves as President of Arete Coaching and Consulting, Inc. in Ann Arbor. She has Spinal Muscular Atrophy, a life-long significant physical disability. Having a home-based business has enabled Ball to maximize her limited energy and create an effective work environment. As a coach, she lives out her passion to help others succeed at achieving their goals and creating a life they love.

Ball is an expert at helping others maximize their abilities while honoring their disabilities.

Through coaching, her clients:
- discover how to tap into vital resources
- identify and mobilize their assets and abilities
- embrace their potential for success
- become empowered to accomplish things that they never thought possible

The coaching process offers clients accountability in taking the necessary steps to make their dreams a reality. This is accomplished through a series of one-on-one phone conversations over a period of three, six or 12 months. Call Coach Peg Ball at (734) 975-1504 for a FREE sample session!

www.aretecoach.com
Looking for a first job is tough for any teenager, especially for those who have a disability. In Livingston County a team of transition counselors, including Dan Durci of the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living, make that transition from high school into the work world a little easier.

Durci and his colleagues work with students from Pinckney, Brighton, Howell, Fowlerville, and Whitmore Lake. Besides assisting with placement, Durci and his colleagues offer students a variety of programs to help them gain real world experience and acquire skills necessary for entering today’s job market. The programs blend classroom instruction with practical, on-the-job training and allow students to earn wages, gain skills, and get connected to employers. The Livingston Educational Service Agency, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Works Skills Corporation, and the individual employers fund the project collaboratively.

June Guido, a 2007 graduate of Howell High School, participated in one of Durci’s programs and gained a permanent job at Pizza Hut in Howell. As a participant of the Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE) program, Guido worked in the Creative Discovery Learning Center, a preschool classroom at Southeast Elementary in Howell, and at Pizza Hut. Guido’s boss at Pizza Hut saw the many talents Guido has and hired her on as a regular employee. She now works there assisting the cooks, preparing boxes, and cleaning the dining areas. She tremendously values the experience she is getting and the great people with whom she is working. Guido ultimately wants to open her own childcare facility and believes the early childhood education experiences she got through the EBCE program will benefit her for a long time to come.

Shane Redinger graduated from Pinckney High School in 2006. Determined to not let his learning disability hamper his goal of finding a career path utilizing his strong people skills, Redinger pursued vocational training at the Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) in Plainwell. Redinger stood out as student at MCTI where he received top grades. Because of his high marks, the school allowed him to skip his second term and go straight to his third term, during which he gained a paid manager’s position at
the school store. Now a graduate of MCTI’s program in retail marketing and customer service, Redinger will soon take a job as the host of the Timbers Restaurant at the new Four Winds Casino in New Buffalo. He attributes much of his success to the assistance of Durci, who introduced Redinger to MCTI and helped out in countless other ways.

Jennifer Border met Durci when she was a student at Fowlerville High School and needed assistive technology to help her attend college. Border has arthrogryposis, a congenital condition that severely limits the use of her arms and legs. Now a senior at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, Border is an honors student with plans to pursue a Ph.D. in human factors psychology. Border ultimately wants to make a significant impact in the field of assistive technology and help others like her get connected to new and rapidly improving assistive devices, such as a headband that allows an individual to control a computer mouse through his or her eyes.

Border has added to her academic learning with work experience while in college. She serves as a test proctor for the disability services office and works as a research assistant in the psychology lab. She has also worked as a receptionist for the University’s honors program. Throughout her experiences Border tries to use her disability as a way to educate and connect with others. She says people are afraid to ask questions or offer help, but she has found that talking openly about her disability helps to break down fears and stereotypes and brings her closer to her peers.

Employment

There are **54.3 million people** in the United States with a disability, totaling **18.1%** of the general US population.

Among people age 21 to 64 with any type of disability, **55.9% are employed**, as compared to 88.2% of the non-disabled population in that age group.

Among Americans with any disability, **55.9%** had some sort of employment; **82% of people** with a non-severe disability, **42.5% of people** with a severe disability, and 88.2% of people with no disability were employed.

Among Americans with hearing impairments, **64% are employed**; 44% of Americans with visual impairments, 41% of Americans with cognitive disabilities, and **34% of people with physical disabilities** are employed.

Among people ages 25 to 64 with a non-severe* disability, **47.6%** have a personal income of less than **$20,000 per year**, as compared to 76.6% of people with a severe* disability and 39.3% of people with no disability.

*The US Census Bureau classifies people as having a “severe” disability if they use a wheelchair, cane, crutches or walker as well as someone who cannot see, hear, lift or carry, use stairs, walk or grasp small objects; is unable to perform daily living activities or has a specific disability, such as autism, cerebral palsy or a developmental disability. Someone with a “non-severe” disability can do these tasks but finds them difficult. Source: US Census Bureau.

Jobs Available

- Marketing Manager
- Web Marketer
- Production Manager
- Electrical Engineer
- Female Teachers
- Dev. Manager

Facts
Ann Arbor resident Melissa Anderson's journey towards independence began with the assistance of the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living. With the guidance and patience of a mentor, Anderson was able to transition into life as a Washtenaw Community College student.

“My mentor and I would talk on the phone a lot or meet on my college campus. She boosted up my confidence to deal with college stress and family communication.” Maria Kirchoff mentored Anderson for two years. During that time, they developed a presentation on the importance of mentoring and how they both grew from the experience. Even though their time together has ended, the lessons learned help her at her current job.

With the help of Michigan Ability Partners (MAP) and a job coach, Anderson landed the ideal job for someone with her skills and interests in 1999. Anderson, 31, considers herself to be a movie buff, so after some prep work, she was able to obtain a job at Hollywood Video where she now works as a customer service representative. Her duties include helping customers locate the movies they want and stocking the shelves. If someone comes to the store and wants a particular movie but can't remember the title, Anderson can usually figure it out.

She knew she always wanted to work at a video store but would need assistance locating a job. That's when she turned to a job developer through MAP, a nonprofit organization which “provides housing supports, vocational and financial services to persons with varying levels of disabilities,” their website states. Their transitional service program meets the needs of students with developmental disabilities who are transitioning from school to the world of work.

Anderson says that her disability is not the most important thing about her: “I'm just like everybody else.” Anderson, who has developmental and learning disabilities, has a job coach through Services To Enhance Potential (STEP). STEP’s mission is to “support individuals in the pursuit of their chosen goals and the achievement of personal satisfaction in their lives,” according to their website.

They provide an array of services, including supports coordination, transition, self-employment, skills training, mobility training and job training to individuals and families. They also assist businesses in recruiting, hiring and retaining employees with disabilities.

Anderson’s job coach checks in on her and makes sure that she is performing job tasks correctly.
She also helped Anderson come up with creative ways to manage her stress on the job, such as how to react when dealing with a rude customer. “I have learned to do breathing exercises or take a break with a good book or some music. I can usually calm myself down pretty easily. When I’m okay, I go back and do the rest of my job,” Anderson said.

To keep herself on track, Anderson has a calendar, planner, and address book. She always puts appointments in her planner and keeps paper, a pen, and a calculator with her at all times. She even has hand-made business cards.

In her spare time, Anderson volunteers at Hartland Hospice as a clerk and is an active member of the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, where she advocates for people with disabilities and participates in monthly meetings at the state capital on disability issues. The Council, part of the Michigan Department of Community Health, includes people with developmental disabilities, their family members, and professionals from state and local agencies that serve people with developmental disabilities. The Council’s mission is to “support people with developmental disabilities to achieve life dreams.”

Anderson has also served as a member of the Washtenaw Community Transition Council for seven years and currently holds the position of co-chair. In this role, she organizes and facilitates meetings that serve students in their transition from school to adulthood.

Anderson is an example of how receiving assistance from a local agency can bring out a person’s inner drive and help him or her succeed in life, not only in a career but also as a contributing member of society.

Anderson offers suggestions to those searching for employment. First, people should ask themselves what kind of job they are looking for. Then they should figure out what they like to do and what kind of skills or talents they are able to bring to a job. Finally, it’s important for people to figure out what sort of support they need to get a job and maintain it. There are agencies available, like MAP and STEP, to assist in this process. Anderson says to “aim high, have a goal, and reach for the stars!”

MICHIGAN WORKS! ASSOCIATION provides services to promote the advancement of Michigan’s workforce development system and its customers and professionals. It enjoys national recognition as the largest and most progressive workforce development association in the United States. The Michigan Works! Association’s members include the Workforce Development Boards, Local Elected Officials, and Michigan Works! Agency Directors from all across the state.

Michigan Works! has served 3 million people since it opened its doors in 1987. It fosters employment and training programs that serve employers and workers by providing support activities and a forum for information exchange. That system has been recognized by the National Alliance of Business as the most innovative in the country.

Through the Association, members can speak with workforce development professionals across the state, coordinate efforts on statewide projects, keep legislators and others informed on workforce development issues, and receive important technical assistance and staff training to deliver services to all customers.

Nowhere else in the United States do private sector business people, local elected officials and administrators belong to a unified association that speaks with a single voice on critical issues that affect workforce development. Nowhere else in the country is there a partnership like the one Michigan Works! enjoys with the state government to help job seekers and employers alike.

Through its public information, training, technical assistance, and marketing activities, Michigan Works! Association provides its members with:

- a highly effective network of communication and information exchange that enables the agencies to be heard at all levels of decision-making.
- more than 1,100 hours of training annually with more than 2,500 people attending workshops, forums and customized orientations.
- important on-site technical assistance and “trouble-shooting” on a variety of issues, including management information systems, cost allocation and procurement.
- a quarterly newsletter, workforce development system brochures, position papers and legislative updates.
- an annual conference with 700 workforce development professionals in attendance, and an annual award celebration recognizing outstanding achievement by program participants and employers.

WASHTENAW COUNTY
555 Towner St.
P.O. Box 915
Ypsilanti, MI 48197-0915
Director: Trenda Rusher
Phone: (734) 544-6850
E-mail: etscgroup@ewashtenaw.org
Web Site: http://etsc.ewashtenaw.org
Contact Person: Jennifer Bivens

LIVINGSTON COUNTY
1240 Packard Dr.
Howell, MI 48843
Director: William Sleight
Phone: (517) 546-7450
E-mail: wsleight@co.livingston.mi.us
Web Site: www.lcmw.org

Michigan Works!
MicroEnterprise Works (MEW) enables people with disabilities to start their own small business. We help people evaluate their business ideas and whether they are personally ready to start a small business or be self-employed. If a business idea looks promising, we assist the client in preparing the business plan and the analysis necessary to receive financial support and start the business.

Many people think that it’s easy to start a business. According to the United States Chamber of Commerce, nine out of 10 small businesses fail within five years. So, we try very hard to help our clients look honestly and realistically at both the opportunities and challenges of starting a business so that they have a good chance of being the one out of 10 who succeed. We do this by suggesting careful, honest, and thorough research during the planning process. We think it is important to know as much as possible about competitors, potential demand from target customers, and how much it really will cost to successfully launch the business. We also help with marketing materials, bookkeeping systems, and operational planning.

Over the 15 years we’ve worked to put people to work for themselves, we have helped people start businesses in custodial services, painting contracting, home improvement, selling products on eBay, woodworking, trophy and engraving sales, metal fabricating, and others—even setting up a hotdog stand! Other new businesses MEW clients have started include massage therapy, manicures and pedicures, tax preparation and public notary services, pest extermination, dog grooming, car detailing, taxidermy, and music lessons.

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When someone comes to us about establishing a business, we ask them:

- Are you highly motivated?
- Are you good at solving problems?
- Can you stay focused and on task?
- Are you adaptable and flexible?
- Are you a risk taker?

If they can answer “yes,” they may have the potential to start a small business because all of these personal characteristics are necessary for someone to be a successful entrepreneur.

In our years of experience we have learned that a business must make personal sense (will it fit in with your family or lifestyle?), business sense (can you sell your product for more than it costs to make and still provide you with a profit or income?), market sense (how many competitors are there in your market and is there room for you?), and financial sense (do you have enough money to make your business successful?).

Many beginning entrepreneurs fail to realize that they will have to work long hours and that it can often be difficult to attract enough customers for the business to be successful. Almost all of our clients who start businesses struggle to generate sales in the first year.

The purpose of our work at MEW is to help beginning entrepreneurs realistically look at their business idea or business expansion and, if feasible, prepare them as thoroughly as possible to “fight and win in the marketplace.”

by Rick Weir
For almost every jobhunter, constant rejection often causes emotional paralysis and depression. We call it “rejection shock.” Your self-image plummets. You feel like something is wrong with you. Resume after resume has gone out. You have followed the rules. You have made sure that every cover letter is carefully aimed toward the person it addresses. Yet there are no calls or interviews. You simply hear nothing.

Unfortunately, this rejection shock can be worse for a person with a disability, because most of us with long-term disabilities have already experienced terrible rejection. We may have been rejected by our playmates when we were young because of how we looked. We may have already been through major struggles getting into college or graduate school because the admissions committee tried to reject us.

A lot of us have sat across from counselors and teachers who told us that our disability prevented us from achieving our dreams instead of helping us figure out how the dream could be realized. Some adults whose disabilities start from accidents or disease lose their friends or even their spouse after their injury or illness. Some of us have been stared at because our disability startles people. To say nothing of the rejecting message implicit in inaccessible buildings, and websites or documents that we can’t read, or being unable to communicate our abilities to people who might hire us.

While the disability issue is a problem that we need to deal with, the real problem is our job-hunting system. Basically “the system” involves looking only for openings and then competing with others for them or sending your resume out to employers and hoping they call you.

This system is also called the numbers game. It works on the principle that employers should attract a large number of applicants, screen a lot of them out, and then pick the best of the remaining applicants. The process of screening people out works against people with anything unusual about them, including, of course, people with disabilities.

The numbers game is frequently presented as the only game in town. Most books on job-hunting explain this system. Most job-hunting classes teach this system. The disability community, through its system of providing services, also teaches this system extensively. The numbers game causes so much difficulty for applicants with disabilities that I wanted to present an alternative strategy. The alternative strategy is described in detail in the book What Color Is Your Parachute? We call it “creative job-hunting.”

Creative job-hunting works better for most job-hunters than the traditional ways of looking, which encompass the worst ways to find a job. The creative job-hunt is one of the five best ways to find a job. The four other best ways are: asking for job leads from people you know.
or meet; visiting employers; calling employers listed in the phone book or other directories and asking them if they are hiring for your position; and doing this in a group with other job-hunters. The creative approach to job-hunting has an 86 percent success rate and encompasses these steps:

Step 1: What Do You Want to Do?
This consists of a thorough evaluation of your strengths and weaknesses. Which of your skills do you most delight in using? What are your talents? What do you really want to do? Look for work that you only think you should do and you probably won’t look very hard. But look for work that you deeply want, and you’ll probably look with all of your soul — and end up finding it.

Step 2: Where Do You Want to Do It?
At this point you must decide where you want to use your skills. You must decide what subjects interest you; where you want to live; what knowledge you already have and can put to use; what your preferred working conditions, such as need for autonomy or direction, are; what jobs exist that use your skills and combine the things you love to do; and what organizations have such jobs.

To figure all of this out, you will need to do a lot of research, both written (visiting Internet sites and libraries) and oral (talking to people on the telephone and in person). I recommend informational interviews as the best way to find out what you need to know. You use such interviews to:

- Talk to people who have the career or job you want. Ask questions to find out if you would like it, how to prepare yourself; what the job requires day-to-day, and how they like each activity. If possible, find someone with a disability like your own or at least another disability.
- Learn about trends at the organizations that might hire you, organizations that recently received grants or any infusion of cash, organizations that might use your skills, details about a potential place you might want to work, and any information that helps you determine the fit between your skills and a potential way of making a living.
- Build relationships with the best of the people you interview. Find ways to contribute to their goals and become known in the field.

Step 3: How Do You Obtain Such a Job?
Now you go to the organizations that interest you the most, whether or not they have a vacancy. Use your contacts to get an interview there. Know the needs of the person with the power to hire you. While you’re there, show you are the person who can solve their problems and make their job easier.

Yes, persons with disabilities do face challenges and discrimination because of their disability. Despite these challenges, the creative job-hunting technique works far better than the numbers game for people with disabilities, not only because of its track record that shows it works for 86 percent of the folks who try it, but also because the entire process of studying and selling your strengths contradicts any negative attitudes about yourself that you may have picked up from others. You will quickly learn how to feature your strengths and become specific about what you can do.
CAPITALIZING ABILITY IN MICHIGAN:

A Collaboration between The Abilities Fund & Ann Arbor CIL’s MicroenterpriseWorks!

by Patti Lind

Throughout the country, people with disabilities continue to experience challenges as participants in the labor force. Recognizing that self-employment allows individuals with disabilities to bypass employment discrimination and is a means to accommodate their disabilities in ways traditional employment situations may not, the Abilities Fund promotes the economic advancement of people with disabilities.

Established in 2000 as a nonprofit organization, the Abilities Fund (AF) is the first and only national organization focused exclusively on expanding entrepreneurial opportunities for people with disabilities. AF recognizes the fullest expression of the entrepreneurial spirit in all its diversity, strength, and boundless originality.

There are 33 million people of working age with disabilities in the United States, according to the 2000 US Census. Yet only 35% of Americans with Disabilities are employed full- or part-time, according to the 2004 National Organization on Disability and Harris Survey of American with Disabilities. This same survey shows that 73% of this unemployed population would prefer to be working.

Perhaps that is why so many Americans with disabilities are looking to self-employment as a route to economic self-sufficiency. In fact, individuals with disabilities are nearly twice as likely as others to choose self-employment, according to a 1996 article by Craig Ravensloot and Tom Seekins in the Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin.

AF offers training, technical assistance, advisory supports, and access to capital for individuals with disabilities, as well as capacity building for the public and private organizations that serve them. AF has assisted hundreds of successful entrepreneurs to start or expand business ventures and has helped public and private agencies implement effective business development services.

AF’s experience in self-employment for people with disabilities includes the design and management of Iowa’s Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program, a business development project within the Vocational Rehabilitation system, and a model that they have duplicated in other states, including Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation with Nebraska Self-Employment Services (NSES). Comprehensive services in both Iowa and Nebraska include Exploring Entrepreneurship workshops, feasibility assessment, business planning and needs-specific customized technical assistance, access to capital, and post-start-up business monitoring.

Additionally, AF recently developed a relationship with the Vocational Rehabilitation Equity Assistance Program (VREAP) to manage the loan program that offers micro-loans of up to $15,000 to qualifying clients of NSES.
In a defining organizational effort, the Abilities Fund, together with a national lending partner, are launching a loan program in 2007 for entrepreneurs with disabilities nationwide. Flexible terms and competitive interest rates for micro-loans ranging from $500 to $25,000 will be available, along with loan guarantees for borrowers in 45 states. All potential borrowers will have access to training and technical assistance through a new suite of online business planning tools that include Feasibility First®, business plan development, and financial planning for business start-up.

Partnerships with organizations who share AF’s philosophy are a critical element of the organization. One current partner is Citibank’s Women and Company® Microenterprise Boost Program that provides AF with funds to pass on to women entrepreneurs with disabilities. Awards to women are for business growth and range from $500 to $2,500.

So, what’s next for the Abilities Fund? Expanding partnerships remains a priority. To meet the goal, the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living’s MicroenterpriseWorks Program and AF are working on a plan for collaboration that will provide the Ann Arbor CIL with a range of AF products and services to be used by clients seeking self-employment. Agencies that refer clients to the Ann Arbor CIL self-employment program will benefit from the collaboration as well. As the collaboration plan comes together, the Ann Arbor CIL’s MicroenterpriseWorks will have a set of products and services that currently are not present in Michigan and will serve the disability community in a way they have not previously experienced. Together with AF, the Ann Arbor CIL will lead the field in microenterprise development and access to capital for individuals with disabilities in Michigan!

To stay updated on the Ann Arbor CIL-Abilities Fund collaboration and for more information about AF programs and activities, visit: www.abilitiesfund.org.

The Abilities Fund provides money to women entrepreneurs with disabilities. Awards to women are for business growth and range from $500 to $2,500.

Develop your business plan in detail.
People with Disabilities Find NEW CAREERS Through Michigan Rehabilitation Services

by Jen Chapin-Smith

With a 100% job-placement rate for graduates of some of its programs, the Michigan Career and Technical Institute helps people with disabilities find life-long careers.

One student of the Institute, who has a hearing impairment, “ended up working at Whirlpool Corporation as a machinist. He has so impressed Whirlpool that they contacted us about hiring additional students. They’re looking at donating some equipment and helping us with our curriculum,” said Dennis Hart, director of the Michigan Career and Technical Institute, a division of Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS).

“In our cabinet-making program we have 100% placement, and those folks end up working at higher-end shops,” Hart said, noting that every student in the Institute’s auto mechanics program landed jobs last year.

The Career and Technical Institute is a residential post-secondary trade training center in Plainwell. Up to 350 students at a time attend the Institute to learn to be auto mechanics, chefs, custodians, secretaries and to train for other jobs as well. The average student is 21 years old.

MRS provides support in training, restoration and placement.

“Our assistance, to some degree, is predicated on the level of independence of the individual,” Hart said. MRS teaches consumers job searching skills, such as how to interview for a job and how to look for a potential employer. If someone has difficulty doing so independently, MRS can help by contacting employers and working towards cultivating a relationship with them. MRS also helps employers retain workers with disabilities. MRS has done ergonomic assessments of desks, for example, to make them accessible for people using wheelchairs.

“We can provide a lot of resources and we have familiarity with all those resources, so we can do some linking,” Hart explained.

MRS assists people with physical and mental, cognitive and learning disabilities to gain employment. Disabilities include amputation, cerebral palsy, heart disease, hearing or vision impairment, mental illness, spinal cord injury, substance abuse and others.

MRS, a part of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, has 36 offices around the state, all of which refer students to the Career and Technical Institute. MRS serves about 42,000 people each year.
Last year, MRS helped 7,000 people get jobs.

Among MRS’s success stories are Odell Brown of Kentwood who uses a right leg prosthesis and now works selling cars. Myreo Dixon of Detroit has paraplegia from a gunshot wound in 1988. Thanks to MRS he completed training at the Southfield-based Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and got a job as an engineer at Detroit Radio Information Service, the area’s only radio reading service for people with visual impairments. Michael Gross of Monroe has cerebral palsy, which limits his mobility. MRS helped him find a job at Lowe’s by teaching him interview skills and finding him job leads.

People with disabilities who apply for help finding a job with MRS meet with a counselor to discuss their abilities, interests, and needs. The counselor helps individuals identify their interests, abilities, and barriers to employment. Help can come in the form of medical exams, vocational testing, work evaluations, or job try-outs.

The counselor then helps individuals choose a job goal and develop a plan for reaching it. Steps towards the goal can include training, such as adult education, trade or business school, college or on-the-job training. It can also include acquiring hearing aids, artificial limbs, braces, assistive technology or help filling out a job application and practice preparing for the job interview. MRS can also provide such support services as interpreters, readers, transportation, and personal assistance.

MRS will even pay up to $1,500 per year for a student with a disability to attend a two- or four-year college if that student has already applied for financial aid.

“It’s all about informed choice,” Hart explained. MRS helps individuals to “know enough about themselves” to choose a career.
Students with disabilities are strongly encouraged to request and utilize the accommodations available through the Access Services Office (ASO) in suite 246 of the EMU Student Center.

Letters requesting accommodations are available through the ASO and should be provided to instructors at the beginning of each semester.

Eastern Michigan University is committed to diversity and to the success of students with disabilities. The mission of the Access Services Office is to make education at EMU fully accessible, opening the door of opportunity to all students.

Welcoming students of all abilities.

Eastern Michigan University
Access Services Office
Suite 246 EMU Student Center
http://www.emich.edu/access_services/

(734) 487-2470
ANN ARBOR OFFICE  Not pictured: Dan Durci, Becky Munce

Glen Ashlock  AT/IT Program Manager
Peg Ball  Life Coach/Advocate
Rick Berk  Event Coordinator
Deanna Boer  Morning Receptionist
Angie Carlson  Computer Instructor
Jen Chapin-Smith  Community Mentorship Coordinator
Shirley Coombs  Chief Financial Officer
Kit Cromwell  IL Advocate
Dan Durci  Transition Counselor
Anna Dusbiber  Youth Program Coordinator
Dana Emerson  Director of Operations
Alex Gossage  Special Projects Coordinator
Carolyn Grawi  Director of Advocacy & Education
Kevin Hartgerink  Info Tech Specialist
Kathy Herron  Employment Manager
Tom Hoatlin  Director of Development
Shemeka Johnson  Community Outreach Specialist
Helen Ledgard  Employment Specialist
Jim Magyar  President & CEO
Alysa Mohr  IL Program Manager
Becky Munce  Intake Specialist
Sue Probert  Info. & Referral Program Manager
Calisa Reid  Afternoon Receptionist
Cheranissa Roach  Business Consultant
George Ridenour  IL Specialist
Melissa Sartori  WTE & Volunteer Coordinator
Mary Stack  Sports & Recreation Specialist
Rick Weir  MicroEnterprise Works Manager
Jeffery Welcome  Accountant
Edward Wollmann  Director of Program Research & Development
Jeanine Wright  Data Specialist

MONROE OFFICE

Gary Dygert  VISTA/I & R Specialist
Linda Maier  Director of Operations
Kelly Meadows  VISTA/Resource Specialist
Mark Rawlings  Computer/Fundraising Specialist
People with disabilities and our advocates created the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living (Ann Arbor CIL) in 1976 because our community was filled with environmental and attitudinal barriers that kept people with disabilities from living full and productive lives.

Over these past 30+ years our volunteers, board members and staff, a majority of whom are people with disabilities, have dedicated themselves to the success of children, youth and adults with disabilities at home, at school, at work and in the community.

At long last we are in the process of launching a capital campaign that will enable the Ann Arbor CIL to secure a “Home of Our Own,” a true “Gathering Place” for the disability community and our advocates. It will be a place where peer support and advocacy continue to flourish, where we rally for change, convene to do business, and relax with food, entertainment, and recreation.

We will not just be breaking ground with our new home, we will also be strengthening our ability to break down barriers to full community participation. No longer will people with disabilities be thought of as tragic figures, needy people without minds of our own, less desirable as friends, mates, co-workers, and consumers.

Imagine our new home: clean, modern, accessible and full of life. A-Ride brings people to the door. Someone welcomes you into a gathering place for peer support and friendship, and people connect you with resources that help you be more successful at home, at school, at work and in the community.

“At long last we are in the process of launching a capital campaign that will enable the Ann Arbor CIL to secure a ‘Home of Our Own,’ a true ‘Gathering Place’ for the disability community.”

~Joan E. Smith, Board Chairperson
Please join us in our efforts to create a vibrant Gathering Place for the disability community! Ambassador and Mrs. Ronald Weiser, and our friends at McKinley, have made a Lead Challenge Gift of $200,000 to the Ann Arbor CIL “Gathering Place Capital Campaign.” For each dollar we raise, they will contribute another dollar!

To help us reach our “FIRST STEP” goal of $600,000. Please contact: Jim Magyar, President and CEO (jmagyar@aacil.org) or Tom Hoatlin, Director of Development (thoatlin@aacil.org) or visit us at www.aacil.org

An investment in the Ann Arbor CIL will create positive change in the lives of people with disabilities in our community and in the communities around us.

In our future we envision:

- Additional education and support services for businesses, non-profit organizations and units of government that employ people with disabilities.
- A Disability Research and Education Program with links to disability study programs at schools, colleges and universities.
- New Peer Support Programs in collaboration with rehabilitation providers.
- An inclusive Sports and Recreation Program.
- Expanded services for people who are blind or visually-impaired.
- New programs for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.
- Creative Employment and Micro Enterprise Programs.
- A state-of-the-art Assistive Technology Center.
- Focused initiatives for Youth with Disabilities.
- A Center for Disability and the Law.
- A Center for Disability and the Family.
- And a Fund for Self-Sufficiency that supports independent living goals.
We’re Here for You

Serving the residents of Washtenaw County for over 40 years.

University of Michigan Home Care Services provides a full range of products and services for people with disabilities. We’re continually expanding our offerings with new and innovative products designed to help you live a more comfortable and independent life.

Our team of professionals will work with you to ensure your complete satisfaction. Whether it’s making sure your equipment fits properly; explaining the correct use of supplies; designing and building custom mobility products; or providing in-house nursing and care…we’re here for you.

The U-M Home Care Services organization partners with many groups and programs, including the Model Spinal Cord Injury Care System and the Wheelchair Seating Clinic. This integrated approach ensures the highest level of service for our clients.

University of Michigan Home Care Services

MedEQUIP • Durable Medical Equipment 800.530.0714 • HomeMed • Home Infusion 800.862.2731
Wheelchair Seating Services • Custom Wheelchairs and Mobility Products 877.868.8889
Michigan Visiting Nurses and Visiting Care • In-home Nursing and Care Services 800.842.5504
ONLINE RESOURCES
for People with Disabilities Looking for Jobs

US Dept. of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy
http://www.dol.gov/odep/
(866) 633-7365; (877) 889-5627 (TTY)

New Freedom Initiative’s Online Resource: a US Government resource for people with disabilities
http://www.disabilityinfo.gov

US Office of Personnel Management: the place to find jobs with the US Government
http://www.opm.gov/disability/
(202) 606-1800; (202) 606-2582 (TTY)

National Business and Disabilities Council
http://www.nbdc.com
(516) 465-1519

Michigan Works!: a state-wide initiative to help Michigan residents find jobs
http://www.michiganworks.org/page.cfm/302
(517) 371-1100; (800) 649-3777 (Michigan Relay for Residents who are Deaf)

Michigan Works! Page on Disabilities
http://www.michiganworks.org/page.cfm/302

Michigan Rehabilitation Services
http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd/0,1607,7-122-25392--,00.html
Ann Arbor Office: (734) 677-1125; (877) 901-9195
(Toll Free); (734) 677-1206 (TTY)

Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living’s Finding a Job or Starting a Business
http://www.aacil.org/wwd_findingajob.shtml
(734) 971-0277

Crossroads Industries: a non-profit organization providing supported employment
http://crossroadsindustries.com/
(989) 732-1233; (877) 982-7677 (Toll Free)

Gateway: a non-profit organization providing vocational training for people with disabilities
http://wwwgatewayvro.org/index.html
(269) 471-2897

Jewish Vocational Service: a non-profit providing employment and training to people with disabilities
http://www.jvsdet.org/disabilities.htm

JVS Career Initiatives Center in Detroit
(313) 833-8100; (313) 833-8321 (TTY)

Work Skills Corporation: an Ypsilanti-based organization providing employment and training
http://www.wsskills.com/
(734) 484-6578

Peckham: a non-profit offering job training, assessment and placement for persons with barriers to employment
http://www.peckham.org/
(517) 316-4000

MOKA: during the past 15 years this non-profit has helped more than 1,500 individuals find jobs of their choice in their local communities
http://www.moka.org/empans.htm
(800) 644-2434

Area Agency on Aging: This organization offers information and referrals on employment
http://www.aaa1b.com
(800) 852-7795

Center for the Education of Women: CEW provides counseling, workshops, and Information and Referral services regarding education and career decision
http://www.umich.edu/~cew/
(734) 998-7080

Michigan Ability Partners: a non-profit agency offering vocational and financial services to people with disabilities
http://www.michiganabilitypartners.org
(734) 975-6880

Michigan Commission for the Blind: this agency helps people with visual impairments find jobs and gain independence
http://www.michigan.gov/cis/0,1607,7-154-28077_28313--,-00.html
(800) 292-4200

Services To Enhance Potential (STEP): a local organization providing employment resources through the Washtenaw Resource Center
(734) 794-7027
http://www.stepcentral.org

Project Able: an IBM Diversity recruitment program offering people with disabilities the chance to explore IBM careers nationwide
Holding a bachelor’s degree from Ohio State University, Carrie demonstrates her talents through a diverse work history. She served as a program manager and supervised a large staff for IBM for 15 years. When her children were small she left the corporate environment and worked coordinating services for children through the Lutheran Church.

As her children grew up and left home, Carrie (her last name is omitted to protect her privacy) opened her own successful restaurant in a small town in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. However, the economy in Michigan forced her to close her doors after 12 years of service. She moved closer to family and took a job as a facilities manager for a new senior retirement home. Yet she faced difficulty with new computer technology and a lack of training, so she lost the job after a very difficult year.

Carrie came to Projects With Industry through Michigan Rehabilitation Services. She had developed depression as a result of the loss of employment, economic stress and chronic arthritis pain.

We worked with Carrie to define what she enjoyed most in a job and helped her create a resume that would reflect that interest. We discovered that the restaurant business was in her heart. After working as a political canvasser (a job she landed on her own) for a small amount of money for about two months, Carrie unsuccessfully applied for a position as a catering director for a local restaurant. We then contacted the human resources director of the same restaurant about a sales representative position in their holiday mail order department. Carrie won this part-time position and worked through the holidays.

Carrie checked in with me regularly for support and came to the AACIL several times to hone her computer skills. She continued to work for the mail order department part-time after the holidays. As her confidence increased, she inquired about cross training with this restaurant with the intent to work in the catering department. Within a couple of weeks, the catering manager called her for an interview. It took about three weeks for the catering manager to realize what an asset Carrie would be to this company. She is now employed full-time with benefits in the catering department doing sales work and will assist with prep if necessary.

While landing this job was difficult at times, Carrie’s effort paid off in the end. The employer has a great employee and a person with a disability has a job that she loves.
Clinical Psychologist Dr Martin Seligman, author of _Authentic Happiness_ tells us that if we want a happy, meaningful life we need to know our strengths and use them as often as possible in our daily lives and to do so for something greater than ourselves. We need to give back to the world.

Many people who visit the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living (AACIL) come in search of just that—a need and desire to give back to the world—to use their strengths and abilities to live a meaningful life. Many individuals do not know what their strengths are, or even worse, how to express themselves so they can give back to the world. The Ann Arbor CIL can help with that, at least in terms of employment.

At the AACIL we have a grant called Projects With Industry (PWI) that is designed to assist individuals with disabilities in employment and engage employers in the process of employing them. The U.S. Department of Education, an arm of the federal government that funds this project, says the grant’s purpose “is to create and expand job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the competitive labor market. This is accomplished by involving private industry partners to help identify competitive job and career opportunities and the skills needed to perform these jobs, to create practical job and career readiness and training programs, and to provide job placement and career advancement.”

The CIL currently employs two full-time Employment Specialists: Helen Ledgard and myself. On any given day you will see us working with individuals with disabilities, most often referred to us from our local vocational rehabilitation agency. Our work includes identifying strengths, setting goals, and determining a plan to achieve employment that includes writing resumes, filling out job applications, making phone calls to employers, and Internet searches. We also get really creative and help individuals see themselves in the field or job they think will make them happiest or use their strengths in the best way.

Use your strengths to make your life meaningful.
In her book *Write it Down, Make it Happen*, Henriette Anne Klauser talks about the power of goal-setting and the even more incredible power of actually writing down your goals. Her main premise is that “if you know what you want, you can have it.” As she says (and as we all know on some level), “setting your intent, focusing on the outcome, being clear about what you want in life can make your dreams come true.”

The first step in the process, according to Klauser, is to write down your goal. Some of our PWI participants read Henriette Anne Klauser’s book first to become clear on what would be ideal for them. We begin with the end goal in mind.

While the employment specialist uses several resources in our community for employment searching, such as Michigan Works! in Ypsilanti, we give one-on-one service to individuals in order to expedite the employment process and to identify barriers that may impede success or reveal an accommodation necessary for employment.

The employment specialist’s job is also to identify, engage and educate employers in our community that are open to recruiting, and assisting individuals with disabilities in achieving their goals. As part of the PWI, we are building a Business Advisory Council (BAC) and assisting in the job placement of the people with disabilities that we serve then tracking their progress. Employers involved in the Business Advisory Council will conduct mock interviews, review resumes, send us their job openings and educate individuals with disabilities on how to improve their skills to obtain employment. In return they get an opportunity to hire a qualified individual for a job, one they know has been through a process of identifying their strengths, setting their goals, and who knows their abilities and has support as they start their work.

Some of these local employers include Home Depot, Edwards Brothers, Toledo Municipal Court, Sears, Frito Lay, Zingerman’s, Washtenaw Community College, Ford Motor Company, Rouse Corporation, McKinley Properties and Caribou Coffee. There are also national companies that actively recruit people with disabilities.

In December 2006 the Ann Arbor CIL met in Lansing with the organizers of the Michigan Business Leadership Network (MIBLN). Many national employers, state agencies and
The Business Leadership Network of Michigan (MIBLN) serves as a resource center for public and private businesses, community leaders, job seekers, employees and consumers with disabilities.

Through its resource center, MIBLN offers:

- Assistance to employers trying to maximize productivity in their workforce through hiring, training, supporting, and advancing workers with disabilities.
- Training in integrating workers with disabilities into the business organization, as well as training for people with disabilities to effectively represent themselves as consumers in the marketplace and workers in the workplace.
- Networking support to create, maintain, and develop linkages between employers, people with disabilities and their representative organizations, agencies, and vendors and to encourage communication between them.
- Consultation to re-orient employment service providers such that their values, structures and efforts respond to employer satisfaction and to help workers with disabilities find new jobs or return to work.
- Research and development to advance best practices in helping people with disabilities find jobs and move forward in their careers.

MIBLN benefits the local community by offering a place where:

- Businesses actively market their products and services to consumers with disabilities because doing so creates profit opportunities.
- Employers actively recruit, hire, train, advance, and support workers with disabilities because doing so raises productivity.
- Agencies and vendors that exist to serve the employment needs of people with disabilities recognize and respond to the fact that employer satisfaction is a fundamental service outcome that must be addressed to guarantee their success and survival.
- People with disabilities, once hired and properly accommodated in their jobs, are not “workers with disabilities,” but simply workers.

The Business Leadership Network (BLN) began as a project of the former federal President’s Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities (PCEPD) Employer Subcommittee. Michigan was one of the first 10 states to host a pilot program and was so successful that such networks now exist in most states. In 2004, the Business Leadership Network in Michigan reengineered itself to better serve the community.

If you receive Social Security disability benefits and are thinking about returning to work, you may fear that if you enter the work world, your benefits will be terminated. Yet in many cases, you can make money in a new job and still receive your Social Security benefits.

If you are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), you are entitled to a nine-month trial work period, during which you can earn as much as you want, and your benefits will not be affected at all. In addition, employment does not count toward your nine-month trial period unless you earn more than $640 per month. If you do earn more than $640 in a month, it is important to report your earnings to Social Security so that you do not lose track of your trial work period allowance and end up owing money back to Social Security.

Once your nine-month trial work period is over, if you make less than $900 per month, you will continue to receive SSDI cash benefits. If you make more than $900 per month, your SSDI cash benefits will end. However, your Medicare coverage will continue for at least seven and three-quarters years after your trial work period is over, regardless of how much you make.

In addition, for three years after your nine-month trial period ends, you can resume receiving your benefits easily if you make less than $900 in any given month. This time is referred to as your “extended period of eligibility.” It is also important to know that any expenses you incur related to your employment can be deducted from your income. So, if your earnings minus your expenses equal less than $900, you can still receive SSDI.

If you are receiving Supplemental Security Income, or (SSI), your cash benefits will be reduced if you begin working, but how much your benefits are reduced depends on how much you earn. If you earn less than $85 per month, your benefits will not be affected at all. If you earn more than that, your benefits will be reduced by half of anything you make over and above $85. For example, if you earn $300 in a month, your benefits will be reduced from $623 to $365.50. If you earn $600, your SSI payment will drop to $365.50. If you earn $1,000, your payment drops to $165.50. You can earn up to $1,331 per month before your SSI benefits are eliminated altogether.

Thus, no matter what you earn, a new job brings you more money. In addition, even if you make more than $1,331 per month, your Medicaid coverage will continue unless you earn more than $25,326 in a year.

If you receive SSDI or SSI, you are eligible for the Ticket to Work program. The program will connect you with a vocational counselor who will help you create a vocational plan. You can work with a vocational counselor at a number of participating local agencies, including the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living. Once you have a vocational plan in place, for as long as you are working on your plan with your counselor, you are exempt from any medical reviews by Social Security. In other words, your eligibility for your benefits will not be questioned as long as you are working on your plan for employment. For a full list of participating agencies, see www.yourtickettowork.com/endir.
The Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) program can help you to save money to accomplish a vocational dream you may not otherwise be able to afford. For example, you may want to purchase a piece of equipment in order to start your own business. Or you may wish to go to school to obtain a degree or license. Under the PASS program, if you receive SSDI and can save that money in the bank, you can apply for SSI and your payment from SSDI will not be considered when determining your financial need for SSI. If you are eligible to receive SSI, you can get up to $623 in cash benefits every month as well as Medicaid coverage. In other words, if your plan is approved, you can put your SSDI money away to save for something and get SSI in the meantime.

MCB's Vocational Rehabilitation Program matches individuals with jobs that suit their current or potential skills and abilities. MCB provides diagnostic evaluations, vocational counseling, and training in skills of blindness at no cost to the consumer. Depending upon an individual's needs and eligibility, additional services may include low-vision equipment, vocational training, technical school training, a college education, job development and placement, and follow-up.

MCB was created under Public Act 260 of 1978, as amended, although Michigan has provided services to its blind residents for more than 50 years. The US Department of Education provides guidance to the Commission through its Rehabilitation Services Administration. MCB programs receive funding through federal grants with matching state revenues.

For more information, call 1-800-292-4200 (voice) or 1-888-864-1212 (TTY).

Finally, the Expedited Reinstatement of Benefits or EXR program works to provide some insurance for you once you are working and no longer receiving benefits. Under the EXR program, if you stop working and need to receive SSDI or SSI benefits again, while you are waiting for your application to be approved by Social Security, you can receive your original benefit amount. The EXR operates only if it has been less than five years since your SSDI or SSI benefits were terminated, and the EXR program will pay your benefits for only 6 months. If your new application is ultimately not approved, you owe no money back to Social Security; any payments made under the EXR program are yours to keep.
The Center for Independent Living extends our sincere appreciation to the participants of this News Feature and Resource Directory. By participating, they have made a financial commitment to the people we reach every day. We are grateful for the businesses and organizations that have been a part of this publication for many years. We especially welcome and thank all of the new community partners found in this year’s magazine. Please patronize these generous organizations.

ACCESSIBILITY

Cornerstone Design, Inc.
940 N. Main Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 663-7580
www.cdiarchitects.com

Cornerstone Design provides creative, responsive architectural services for all types of projects. A particular specialty is universal design for people of all ages and abilities. Firm principal, David Esau, AIA, also consults on accessibility issues through the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living.

Phoenix Contractors, Inc.
2111 Golfside
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Phone: (734) 487-9640
Fax: (734) 547-0432
www.phoenixco.biz

Phoenix Contractors, Inc. is a general contractor and construction manager with extensive experience in modification of existing commercial and institutional buildings for full accessibility, particularly in multi-story structures. Phoenix works regularly with area architects and can provide design-build services for renovation of existing or development of new commercial buildings.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Huron Valley Ambulance LifeLink
1200 State Circle
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(734) 477-6453 or (866) 824-4413
www.hva.org

HVA LifeLink is an in-home monitoring system that allows you to live independently but still reach loved ones or 9-1-1 immediately if you need them. System consists of a speakerphone and button to wear on neck or wrist. Calls go into HVA’s local call center, not out-of-state.

Huron Valley Ambulance is your locally owned, nationally accredited nonprofit ambulance service. Services include emergency paramedic ambulance service, non-emergency ambulance transportation, wheelchair vans, special event coverage and community outreach. General info available at (734) 971-4420.

ADVOCACY

Association for Community Advocacy
1100 N. Main, Suite 205
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 662-1256

ACA, in partnership with consumers, works to assure personal choice, self-determination and opportunities for full participation in all aspects of community life for persons with disabilities. ACA has recognized expertise in entitlements, special education and criminal justice advocacy, home ownership, community organizing, systems change, and person-centered planning.

Michigan Ability Partners
3810 Packard, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(734) 975-6880

Michigan Ability Partners is an Ann Arbor-based, private, non-profit human service agency that helps persons with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness by accessing and/or providing shelter, food, medical care, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, affordable housing and community employment throughout Southeastern Michigan.
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
740 West Lake Lansing Road, Suite 400
East Lansing, MI 48823
(517) 333-2477
www.copower.org

The Michigan Disability Rights Coalition is a statewide network of individuals and organizations that advance the issues of Michigan’s disability community through grassroots activism, public education and advocacy. MDRC works to build opportunities for people with disabilities so that we may live fully integrated lives within our chosen communities.

United Cerebral Palsy of Metro Detroit (UCP/Detroit)
23077 Greenfield Rd. Suite 205
Southfield, MI 48075
(248) 557-5070
www.ucpdetroit.org

Our Mission is to advance the independence of all people with disabilities and to secure their right to self-determination and inclusion, i.e., “Life without limits for people with disabilities.”

UCP/Detroit provides information and referral services, employment programs (Benefits Planning, Assistance and Outreach Project, Customized Employment), individual and family support services (Advocacy, Assistive Technology and Parent Coalition), community inclusion, independent living supports and community education.

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The Ark
316 S. Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 761-1800 Office (734) 761-1451 Hotline
Email: ark@theark.org
Web: www.theark.org

The Ark is a non-profit music venue located on Main Street in Ann Arbor between Liberty and William Streets. Founded in 1965, The Ark is dedicated to the presentation, preservation, and encouragement of folk, roots, and ethnic music.

The Ark is wheelchair accessible and works to accommodate any special seating needs. Please note that the club doors open ½ hour before a performance. If someone in your party has a wheelchair or special seating needs, we recommend coming slightly earlier and ringing the doorbell located next to our front entry doors so we can seat your party prior to entry of the general public. This way we can assure adjacent seating for your friends and family.

Please call with any seating concerns or special needs at (734) 761-1800 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays or email us at ark@theark.org.

BRAIN INJURY REHABILITATION

Brain Injury Association of Michigan
8619 W. Grand River, Suite I
Brighton, MI 48116-2334
(810) 229-5880 or (800) 772-4323
E-Mail: info@biami.org
Web: www.biami.org

The Brain Injury Association of Michigan is a non-profit organization that brings together people with brain injury, families, friends, and professionals to improve the quality of life for people living with brain injury.

More than 25 years ago, a group of concerned families, living with brain injury founded the Association to ensure that needed services and supports were available for people with brain injuries and their families. The Association is a charter affiliate of the Brain Injury Association of America.

Our mission is to enhance the lives of those affected by brain injury through education, advocacy, research, and local support groups; and to reduce the incidence of brain injury through prevention.

BrainTrainers, LLC
2900 S. State St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 665-1922
Email: Director@BrainTrainersOnline.com

BrainTrainers in one of only a handful of full-time day programs based upon a time-proven holistic small-group model, and the only program of its type in Michigan. Now successfully providing its 7th year of semester-based treatment, it has become the model of choice for referrals from a growing number of physicians, case managers, and other professionals. Treatment encompasses cognitive and interpersonal skills, vocational development, and functional treatment. Assessments are provided throughout the year, all therapy is individualized to maximize client skills and compensate for targeted deficits. Focused individual services include Psychology, Vocational Training, Occupational Therapy, Home Evaluation, Community Education, and individual case consultation.

Eisenhower Center
3200 E. Eisenhower Parkway
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(800) 554-5543
Email: ectbi@earthlink.net

Eisenhower Center provides neurorehabilitation services in a state-of-the-art residential setting. We assist our clients in reaching their fullest potential in an environment that combines hard work and commitment to treatment. Our services include a variety of recreational and therapeutic activities that encourage effective socialization and community integration.

Eisenhower Center
3200 E. Eisenhower Parkway
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(800) 554-5543
Email: ectbi@earthlink.net

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Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers, Inc.
Corporate Offices/Treatment Center
5570 Whittaker Road  PO Box 970230
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
(734) 482-1200 or (800) 968-6644
www.rainbowrehab.com
admissions@rainbowrehab.com

Rainbow Rehabilitation Centers provides rehabilitation services to individuals who have experienced a spinal cord or traumatic brain injury. Rainbow's continuum of care allows individuals with injuries to achieve their highest potential in the least restrictive, most independent setting possible. Our professional, specially trained staff consistently provides understanding, supportive and progressive rehabilitation at every stage of the recovery process. Residential, day treatment and outpatient services are available for adults and children in locations throughout Washtenaw, Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

ResCare Premier
Residential Rehabilitation Continuum
(734) 476-6152

ResCare Premier's Residential Rehabilitation Continuum is dedicated solely to the treatment of individuals with acquired brain injury. Our Comprehensive Continuum offers affordable services that foster exceptional outcomes for persons with extensive rehabilitation needs and for individuals with behavioral issues.

The Residential Rehabilitation Continuum incorporates traditional therapies into functional, community-based skill training. It is specifically designed to provide the concentrated life skills training so vital to regaining autonomy and re-establishing quality, productive lifestyles.

Individuals may be admitted to any program along the Continuum. Our Continuum allows individuals to transition to more independent settings, stop along the way to fully integrate newly acquired skills, or step back to practice challenging tasks. This continuity ensures that progress is never interrupted.

Special Tree Rehabilitation System
39000 Chase Street, Romulus, MI 48174
(800) 648-6885
www.specialtree.com

For over 30 years, Special Tree has been one of Michigan's leading resources for subacute rehabilitation, inpatient, residential, outpatient, and in-home neurorehabilitation services. A CARF- and JCAHO-accredited provider, Special Tree serves the needs of children and adults with brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, and other disabilities. Services are offered at over 20 conveniently located facilities across Mid-Michigan, Metro-Detroit and the Southeast Region.

CASE MANAGEMENT

Debra Dzenko & Associates, LLC
14397 Norman Street
Livonia MI 48154
Phone: (734) 464-8706
Fax: (734) 468-0247
debradzenko@sbcglobal.net

Debra Dzenko & Associates, LLC is an independently owned and operated Case Management and Rehabilitation consulting service. Debra Dzenko, RN-BC, BSN, CRRN, CCM, established her business in 2000 in order to provide professional, personalized advocacy for individuals who have been seriously injured in motor vehicle accidents. With over 35 years as a registered nurse and close to 25 years working with individuals with spinal cord injuries and traumatic brain injuries, Ms. Dzenko's expertise and relationships with providers and payors enable her to obtain those necessary services and products that assist individuals to experience the most independent, quality life possible.

ASSISTIVE MEDIA

Assistive Media
400 Maynard Street, Suite 404
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Email: info@assistivemedia.org
Web: www.AssistiveMedia.org

Assistive Media is the only service on the Web that delivers spoken-word recordings of traditional print media for people who have difficulty reading text because of a visual, physical, or perceptual disability. With a recording studio located within the AACIL, Assistive Media focuses on reproducing titles from highly regarded periodicals (The New Yorker, Harper’s, Wired, Scientific American, Atlantic Monthly, The Economist, Civilization, Foreign Affairs, Smithsonian, The Ann Arbor Observer, and more) and independent writers, providing an eclectic mixture of interesting and educational works of non-fiction, essays, social commentary, history, fiction, humor, poetry, and criticism. Assistive Media’s free online service is located at www.AssistiveMedia.org

COUNSELING

Jan Hansen, Ph.D.
101 S. Ann Arbor St., Suite 203A
Saline, MI 48176
(734) 429-4244

 Licensed psychologist based in Murphy's Crossing in Saline with extensive experience providing psychological counseling to individuals living with a head injury, cancer, stroke, or other disabilities. Dealing with adjustment, self-acceptance, and working with feelings of confusion, anxiety, and depression are very important in recovery. Marital and family counseling and group counseling are also available.

BrainTrainers

BrainTrainers Rebuilding Ability For Life

Ann Arbor's Premiere Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation Day Program

2900 South State Street, Suite 22
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-665-1922 ph 734-665-1923 fx
www.BrainTrainersOnline.com
DENTISTRY

Maryann Griffith, D.D.S.
2340 East Stadium Blvd., Suite 6
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 973-3200

Dr. Griffith has been providing gentle dental care for toddlers, senior citizens and every age in between for the last 16 years. Services include preventative dental cleanings, periodontal treatment, crowns and bridges, cosmetic dentistry, “white fillings”, Zoom™ bleaching system, orthodontics and more, all in a friendly atmosphere. Her barrier-free office is located between St. Francis and Trader Joe’s on East Stadium Blvd.

DRIVING AIDS AND SERVICES

A&A Driving School –
Drivers Rehabilitation Center of Michigan
28911 Seven Mile Road
Livonia, MI 48152
(734) 422-3000
www.aa-driving.com

Motor safety and mobility have been our goals since 1959. Evaluations and trainings take place in automobiles or vans with a variety of adaptive equipment. Individualized programs for persons with physical, visual, cognitive and/or emotional disabilities are available. Our highly specialized staff is ADID-certified driver rehabilitation specialists and include occupational therapists, special educators, and certified driving instructors.

Advantage Mobility Outfitters
3990 Second St.,
Wayne, MI 48184
(800) 990-8267
www.advantagemobility.net

Advantage Mobility Outfitters provides high quality sales and service of new and used vehicles and modifications such as wheelchair and scooter lifts, hand controls, raised roofs and doors, and more. With many options to meet your needs, Advantage develops custom mobility solutions for all types and brands of vans, cars, and RVs. We offer pick-up and delivery service, and a mobile repair unit that can be dispatched right to your home or business. With top-notch sales, service, and repair, Advantage has served the Ann Arbor and Metro-Detroit communities for more than 25 years.

Ford Mobility Motoring Program
P.O. Box 529
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303
Phone: (800) 952-2248
TTY: (800) 833-0312
Fax: (800) 292-7842
Email: mobilitymotoring@fordprogramhq.com
Website: www.fordmobilitymotoring.com

GET IN. GET OUT. For persons with physical disabilities, having choices in modified Ford, Lincoln or Mercury cars, vans, trucks, CUVs and SUVs can mean the difference between staying home and getting to work. The Ford Mobility Motoring Program provides up to $1,000 toward the cost of adaptive equipment, or up to $200 for an alert hearing device, after-market lumbar support seats or running boards on a new Ford, Lincoln or Mercury vehicle. The Program also offers Ford Credit Mobility Financing and comprehensive Roadside Assistance. Visit your local Ford, Lincoln or Mercury dealer to determine which vehicle would be best adapted to serve your needs.

Brain Injury Rehabilitation Programs

Our professional staff consistently provides understanding, supportive and progressive rehabilitation at every stage of the recovery process.

For more information call...
(734) 482-1200
www.rainbowrehab.com

What Are Your Goals?

Let us help you achieve them.

- Person-centered, choice-driven treatment
- Serving adults and children with active, long term, and transitional needs
- Programs in brain injury, spinal cord injury, and multiple trauma

Special Tree Rehabilitation System | www.specialtree.com

Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living | ACCESS 2007 | 37
General Motors Mobility Program with OnStar
P.O. Box 5053
Troy, MI 48007
(800) 323-9935
TTY (800) 833-9935
www.gmmobility.com

GM Mobility is dedicated to making automotive transportation easier and more accessible for people with special needs. Through the GM Mobility Reimbursement Program, customers can now get up to $1,000 reimbursement PLUS two extra years of OnStar standard service when eligible adaptive equipment is installed in a new, eligible General Motors vehicle. OnStar can help with emergency assistance and other helpful services. Limit $1,000 total reimbursement per eligible vehicle. To qualify, vehicle must be adapted and a claim submitted within 12 months of the date of vehicle purchase/lease. To learn more, please call 1-800-323-9935 or visit gmmobility.com.

Gresham Driving Aids
30800 Wixom Road
Wixom, MI 48393
(800) 521-8930

The leader in quality modified vehicles. Gresham Driving Aids, Inc. has serviced the disability community for over 38 years. Utilizing the latest technology from companies such as Ricon, Braun, Crow River, MPS and others, Gresham equips vehicles to maximize the abilities of their customers. Ask their many satisfied customers – your friends – then call Gresham for your mobility needs!

MobilityWorks
1965 East Avis
Madison Heights, MI 48071
(866) 885-8267 or (248) 616-3004
www.mobilityworks.com

We are Michigan’s largest adaptive vehicle and equipment dealer. Since 1986, the personnel at MobilityWorks have been dedicated to satisfying the transportation needs of active people with wheelchairs and scooters. By representing the best equipment in the industry, the sales consultants and technicians work to find the best long-term solution for our customers. MobilityWorks offers consultative fitting, extensive new and used vehicle inventories, a 5000 sq. ft. indoor showroom, financing options, 24-hour help line support, vehicle rentals, customer lounge, and trade-in availability for current adapted van owners.

DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Christian Roux, Ltd.
561 Woodlawn Avenue
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
Phone: (734) 483-7350
Fax: (734) 483-7350
Email: hccroux@ameritech.net
Web: www.hurricanecrutch.com

Hurri-Cane/Crutch is the first ergonomically correct designed aircraft aluminum crutch with the custom UltraTip™ and Ergonomic Multi-Purpose Switch Grip™. It is the strongest, lightest and most adjustable walking aid built in America today and weighs 27 ounces. The open-arm cuff eliminates underarm pressure.

The Switch Grip™ is ergonomically designed and tilted downward to help prevent inflammation of the tendons. The hand is in a natural position.

The Hurri-Cane/Crutch is adjustable by ½” increments and accommodates children and adults up to 6’6” tall. A wide range of exciting colors is available with the Hurri-Cane/Crutch.

New Americane™, an ergonomic and fully adjustable cane that can be upgraded to a Fore Arm Crutch. Documented on the national television program “The Profiles Series.”

Also see: You Tube, Meta Cafee, Google Video, AOL, Video and Yahoo Video.

New! Multi-Purpose Ergonomic Switch-Grip™ for Canes, Crutches, Walkers, Four Wheelers/Walkers, Wheelchairs and Industrial uses such as Power Tools, Exercise Equipment and Bicycles. Every Thing with a 7/8” shaft. Accessories, Cane Holder, Hand strap, Eis pick. Call us for an in-service (734) 483-7350

Fusion Medical
802 Main Street
Essexville, MI 48732
(866) My-Fusion
www.fusionmedical.com

Fusion Medical is not just a medical supply company; it is a multi-level RESOURCE for people with spinal cord injuries. When you become part of the Fusion network, you will find new opportunities geared toward health, family, and fun. Fusion Medical’s family of collaborative organizations will keep you informed of community events, SCI seminars, adaptive sporting events, and innovative new products. In the process, we will provide you with the products you need, when you need them, hassle-free. At Fusion Medical, we focus on providing resources for the active lives of our customers, so that our customers can Focus On Living.

Do you live independently but want to be able to reach help instantly?

HVA LifeLink can put your mind at ease.

- One button summons help immediately.
- Monitored locally by HVA’s 9-1-1 Call Center, not out-of-state operators.

Call 734-477-6453 or 1-866-824-4413

HVA
Community-owned • Nonprofit • Nationally accredited
Quality Home Medical Equipment, Inc.
1533 S. Wayne Road
Westland, MI 48186
(734) 721-4821
(734) 721-9866 Fax

Quality Home Medical Equipment Inc. is a new, family-owned company that is dedicated to providing our clients with prompt, professional care and assisting with all your home care needs. We offer a range of products including hospital beds, patient lifts, ambulatory aides, bathroom accessories and scooters. We specialize in wheelchairs – manual, power and standing chairs, with great emphasis on patients’ specific needs. Our seating and mobility specialist has over 10 years of experience, and we also have certified delivery techs and a caring reimbursement specialist. We offer delivery, set up and instruction in your home and a superior repair service for most equipment.

University of Michigan Home Care Services - MedEQUIP
2705 S. Industrial Highway
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 971-0975 or (800) 530-0714
www.um-homecare.org

MedEQUIP, part of the University of Michigan Health System, is a leader in home medical equipment, customized wheelchairs, and respiratory care. Our highly skilled technicians and respiratory therapists can handle all your home medical equipment needs at an affordable price.

Wright & Filippis
3330 Washtenaw
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(800) 482-0222

For over 60 years, Wright & Filippis has been a leader in prosthetics, orthotics, home medical equipment, respiratory care, medical supplies, and barrier-free design. Their reputation for providing superior customer service has enabled Wright & Filippis to build the Midwest's largest full-service company specializing in total physical rehabilitation. With everything from portable oxygen and hospital beds to diabetic supplies and wheelchair lifts, Wright & Filippis provides Michigan's largest selection of home medical products & services.

EDUCATION

Ave Maria School of Law
Services for Students with Disabilities
Student Affairs - Ave Maria School of Law
3475 Plymouth Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
(734) 827-8040
www.avemarialaw.edu

Throughout history, mankind has sought to implement justice through law. At the core of this effort is the search for truth with an emphasis on the inherent dignity of the human person. With these principles in mind, Ave Maria School of Law provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to practice law at the highest levels.

Ave Maria School of Law is located in a modern, accessible facility in northeast Ann Arbor. The Office for Student Affairs is committed to addressing the needs of students with disabilities to ensure that both the academic program and physical facilities are fully accessible, supporting the entry of persons with disabilities into the legal profession.

EMU Access Services Office
Suite 246 EMU Student Center
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Telephone: (734) 487-2470
http://www.emich.edu/access_services/

The Access Services Office ensures that students with disabilities receive the accommodations they need to succeed in the classroom and participate in extracurricular activities, conducts educational programs for faculty, staff, and students that promote access and inclusion, and advocates for changes in policies and procedures that make the University more welcoming and accessible environment for everyone.

U of M Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)
G-664 Haven Hall
505 S. State St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045
(734) 763-3000
www.umich.edu/~sswd

SSD provides services to students with visual, mobility, or hearing impairments, learning or psychological disabilities, and chronic health problems. SSD helps facilitate such services as accessible campus transportation, adaptive technology, and sign language and oral interpreting. All services are free of charge.

SSD staff is available to answer questions and provide referrals concerning admission, registration, services available, financial aid, etc., before and during enrollment at the University. In addition, SSD can help assess the need for modified housing, attendants, transportation, classroom accommodations, and adaptive equipment.

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WDET-FM/Wayne State University
Audio Information Since 1978

When was the last time you smiled at your radio?

We bet you would if it was reading your local newspaper!

If you or a loved one can't read because of vision loss, illness or injury, DRIS can help. Volunteer readers provide audio access to more than 100 local and national newspapers, magazines, newsletters, handbills, consumer information and other items not available in Braille or on tape—bringing words to life through radio. Issue-based programs, support-forums, stories and other audio services also offered. Audio streaming and archives on demand!
Washtenaw Community College
Learning Support Services
4800 East Huron River Drive
P.O. Box D-1
Ann Arbor, MI 48106
(734) 973-3342
TDD (734) 973-3635
www.wccnet.org/studentresources/learningsupport/

Learning Support Services (LSS) provides the following services for students enrolled at WCC:

- Free tutoring is provided for all students enrolled in credit classes.
- Academic advising is available on an individual basis for academic needs.
- Services for students with documented disabilities include assistance with obtaining reasonable accommodations and use of specialized technology.
- Learning Disabilities Assessment: A free comprehensive assessment for enrolled students is available by a Learning Disability Specialist. Please call (734) 973-3342 or stop by LA 104.

Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD)
1819 S. Wagner
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1406
(734) 994-8100
www.wash.k12.mi.us

Washtenaw Intermediate School District coordinates/delivers programs/services to support continuous improvement of student achievement in the school districts of Ann Arbor, Chelsea, Dexter, Lincoln, Manchester, Milan, Saline, Whitmore Lake, Willow Run, Ypsilanti, and public school academies. Guided by Washtenaw County Common Expectations for Student Learning, this regional educational service agency:

- Provides school improvement consultation, assessment/curriculum/instruction assistance.
- Offers the latest educational training.
- Provides consultant/research assistance and resources.
- Coordinates programs/services too expensive or specialized for one school district to operate.
- Performs regulatory functions for the Michigan Department of Education.
- Coordinates/supports services for students with special needs from birth through age 26.

EMPLOYMENT/VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth
Michigan Rehabilitation Services
3810 Packard, Suite 170
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(734) 677-1125

MDLEG-RS is a state- and federally-funded program which partners with persons with disabilities in preparing for, finding and maintaining employment. The goal is to provide comprehensive, coordinated, effective and efficient vocational rehabilitation services designed to assess, plan, and achieve vocational success consistent with the person’s interests, priorities, strengths, abilities, capabilities and needs. There are MDLEG-RS offices located throughout the state, serving the employment needs and goals of people with a wide range of disabilities.

FINANCIAL PLANNING, BANKING & ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY LOANS

Ann Arbor Commerce Bank
2950 State Street South
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 887-3100
www.annarborcommerce.com

Ann Arbor Commerce Bank is a full-service Community Bank established in 1990 to provide local financial options for all your financial needs. Our reputation is based upon experience, trust, personal attention, and reliability. We are located on the corner of State & Eisenhower, with ample free parking and barrier-free access. We provide a complete array of products and services including:

- Deposit Products & Services – Personal and Business Checking & Savings; CDs, IRAs & HSAs; Worldwide ATM Service; Debit Cards; Drive-thru lanes; Saturday Banking; Telephone Banking – 1.866.330.3233; Internet Banking – www.annarborcommerce.com

- Personal Loans & Services – Residential Mortgages; Home Equity Loans & Lines; Construction Loans; Bridge & Lot Loans; Installment Lending; Private Banking

- Business Loans & Services - Loans & Lines; Cash Management; Merchant Services; Courier Services; Sweep Accounts

- Trust & Investment Services – Financial Planning; Trust Services; Estate Planning & Settlement; Retirement Plans; Investment Management

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Jennifer E. Doble, M.D.

Physical Medicine Electromyography
Electroencephalography
Traumatic Brain Injury
Amputee Clinic Occupational Rehabilitation

Sports Medicine
Rehabilitation
Acupuncture
Botox

Performing Arts Medicine

St. Joseph Mercy Hospital
Reichert Health Building
5333 McAuley Drive, Suite 5106 • Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Genoa Medical Center
2305 Genoa Business Park Dr., Suite 210 • Brighton, MI 48114

St. Joseph Mercy - Arbor Health Building
990 W Ann Arbor Trail, Suite 201 • Plymouth, MI 48170

(734) 434-6660 • (800) 767-3336
HOME HEALTH/ PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

Aegis Health Perspectives, Inc./ Aegis Life Care, LLC
20770 Middlebelt, Suite 1
Livonia, MI 48152
(248) 615-1730
www.aegishp.com


Area Agency on Aging 1-B
Livingston/Washtenaw County Access Office
3550 Liberty Road, Suite 2
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(800) 852-7795
www.aaa1b.com

The Area Agency on Aging 1-B (AAA 1-B), a nonprofit organization, offers support, resources, services and information to assist older adults, persons with disabilities or their caregiver. Trained resource specialists will answer questions and connect individuals to more than 5,000 services and providers in southeast Michigan. The mission of the agency is to help older adults and persons with disabilities remain living in their homes or chosen place of residence for as long as possible. The AAA 1-B serves the counties of Washtenaw, Livingston, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw.

Community Housing Alternatives
P.O. Box 980767
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
(734) 482-6585
rhonda@communityresidence.org
www.communityhousingalternatives.org

CHA, a subsidiary of Community Residence Corporation, offers affordable housing and homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families in Southeast Michigan. This service is provided with the support of federal, state, local and private funding sources.

For homeownership, CHA serves households in the approved Urban County areas, which include Ypsilanti City and the following Townships: Ypsilanti, Pittsfield, Superior, Northfield, Salem, Ann Arbor, Bridgewater, York and Scio. Through development and supportive management of affordable and accessible rental housing and through training and assistance with the home purchase process, CHA assists individuals and families in identifying and securing the housing option of their choice.

Community Residence Corporation
1851 Washtenaw Avenue
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
(734) 482-3300
steven@communityresidence.org
www.communityresidence.org

CRC’s mission is to provide people with disabilities living option, life choices and control of their futures. As we enter our 21st year, CRC offers: Supervised Living in licensed group homes with 24-hour staffing; and Supported Living in the customer’s home providing staffing and support based on each individual’s needs and desires.

Through our subsidiary, Community Living Network, we offer Fiscal Intermediary Services for people who desire control over their individual budgets and a more self-determined life. Customers hire and employ their own support staff, and CLN acts as a payroll service producing paychecks and paying the appropriate taxes. Other bill payments can be made upon request. Each customer receives monthly statements regarding their financial activity. CLN is not an employment service or an employer. This service is available in Washtenaw, Jackson, Hillsdale, Livingston, Macomb, Ottawa and St. Clair Counties.

Look for our new administrative offices sometime this fall or winter at 1851 Washtenaw, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.
Glacier Hills Home Care
3909 Research Park Dr., Suite 600
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(734) 769-5758 or (877) 971-4200
www.ghhomecare.org
Service: Not-for-profit private duty home care agency provides a comprehensive range of quality care services 3 to 24 hours per day. Skilled nursing services include wound care, medication set-up and education, and care management of acute and chronic illnesses. Nursing oversight includes initial assessment and supervisory visits of home health aides. Fee: Private Pay

Partners in Personal Assistance
1100 N. Main Suite 117
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6354
(734) 214-3890
www.annarborppa.org
info@annarborppa.org
Partners in Personal Assistance (PPA) offers an empowering solution for people with disabilities (Consumer Employers) who want to exercise independence and self-determination in managing their personal care. Personal Assistants (PAs) employed through PPA have access to health care benefits and training opportunities. PPA staff and volunteers can assist Consumer Employers in identifying and screening potential PAs. PPA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization managed by Consumer Employers and Personal Assistants. Services can be covered by private funds, insurance, and Medicaid long-term care programs.

ResCare HomeCare (formerly First Choice)
(800) 548-3467
www.firstchoicebestchoice.com
Who We Are: First Choice is a 24-hour live-in homecare agency exclusively providing live-in care to the elderly and people with special needs.
Our Mission: Is to support and provide a professional, compassionate live-in program to individuals who choose to receive care in the comfort and familiar surroundings of their own home.
The Services We Provide:
For the recovering and elderly, our caregivers provide:
• Personal Assistance
• Medication Reminders
• Companionship and Conversation
• Nutritional Meal Preparation
• Every Day Living

University of Michigan Home Care Services
– Michigan Visiting Nurses
2850 S. Industrial Highway
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(800) 842-5504
www.umvn.com
Michigan Visiting Nurses provides a broad range of high-quality, reasonably-priced home care services to the community.
Care may range from minimal assistance with personal care to highly technical and specialized nursing support. All services are customized to fulfill our patient’s unique and changing needs, and are available on a per-visit, shift or hourly basis. Care is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We’re proud to have been serving Southeast Michigan since 1909!
Michigan Visiting Nurses serves patients in Genesee, Hillsdale, Ingham, Jackson, Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne counties. Our main office is in Ann Arbor, with satellite offices in Bloomfield, Brighton, Dearborn, Jackson and Plymouth.
Lou Weir
7990 Grand River, Ste A
Brighton, MI 48114
(810) 227-1300
In Ann Arbor: (734) 662-3160

The Law Office of D. Louis Weir specializes in helping clients in the areas of Worker’s Disability compensation and Social Security Disability. Mr. Weir has been in practice in the Ann Arbor area for more than 20 years. Mr. Weir is able to provide high-quality representation, along with personal service. Initial inquiries are at no cost.

Washtenaw County Library for the Blind & Physically Disabled
4135 Washtenaw Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
(734) 973-4350
(888) 460-0680
www.ewashtenaw.org
lbpd@ewashtenaw.org

The Library loans books and magazines on audiocassette tape and in large print to individuals who are certified as being unable to read standard print due to a physical disability. All services are free including mailing materials through the US Postal Service. The Library also loans descriptive videos and has assistive technology available for consumer use, including Internet access. Computer training is provided at no charge. Regular programming includes a bi-monthly Book Lovers Club, a bi-annual technology fair, and other social programs. For additional information, contact the Library.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Ann Arbor District Library
www.aadl.org
Downtown Library: 343 S. Fifth Ave., Ann Arbor MI 48104
Branch Locations: Malletts Creek: 3090 E. Eisenhower Pkwy., Ann Arbor MI 48108
Northeast: 2713 Plymouth Rd., Ann Arbor MI 48105
Pittsfield: 2359 Oak Valley Dr., Ann Arbor MI 48103
West: 2503 Jackson Ave., Ann Arbor MI 48103

AADL circulates books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, audio books and art prints. Large-print books, low-vision aids, foreign-language books, and books for non-native readers of English are available. AADL offers a wide variety of programs, including lectures, panel discussions, musical events and public Internet classes. Internet access, word processing and other software programs are also available at all AADL locations. Hours: Mon. 10 am – 9 pm; Tues. – Fri 9 am – 9 pm; Sat. 9 am – 6 pm; Sun. noon – 6 pm.

LIFE COACHING

Arete Coaching and Consulting Inc.
Ann Arbor, MI
Phone: (734) 975-1504
Fax: (734) 975-2848
Email: peg@aretecoach.com
Web: www.aretecoach.com

Life Coach Peg Ball is an expert at helping others maximize their abilities while honoring their disabilities.

Through coaching you will:
• discover how to tap into vital resources
• identify and mobilize your assets and abilities
• embrace your potential for success
• become empowered to accomplish things that you never thought possible

The coaching process offers you accountability in taking the necessary steps to make your dreams a reality.

Services include:
Independent Living Coaching for those seeking greater independence and empowerment, transitioning wisely from high school to college, finding the right career or job, designing an optimal living environment, or meeting unique challenges posed by progressive disabilities
Health Coaching to achieve and maintain personal wellness
Consultations in natural health alternatives and nutrition, assistive technology, and noninvasive ventilation alternatives
Lifestyle Coaching to promote positive approaches to being “out” for lesbian or bisexual women with disabilities
Person Centered Planning, a unique and comprehensive approach to developing a life plan that is based on a person’s strengths and dreams

Coaching is primarily provided by phone, thus decreasing time, travel and access concerns for active, busy clients with disabilities or health challenges. Coach Peg is certified by the Coach Training Alliance of Boulder, CO. Call (734) 975-1503 for a free sample session!
MEDICAL SERVICES IN HOME

University of Michigan Home Care Services - HomeMed
2850 S. Industrial Hwy., Suite 50
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 975-7441 or (800) 862-2731

As a home infusion provider and licensed pharmacy, HomeMed provides a wide range of services to safely and effectively facilitate care to the patient in the convenience and comfort of his or her home.

Since 1989, we have been providing infusion medications, nutritional therapy, specialty drugs, high-tech in-home nursing and care management services throughout Michigan. Our core staff of skilled pharmacists, nurses and dietitians is among the most experienced clinicians in the area.

As a clinical service within The University of Michigan Health System (UMHS), HomeMed is committed to maintaining the institution's tradition of leadership in health care.

OPTICAL/LOW VISION

Dr. Steven Bennett, F.A.A.O.
Certified Low Vision Specialist
2000 Green Road, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
(734) 930-2373

The specialty of Low Vision provides an improvement in vision through the use of state-of-the-art technology. Devices such as biotic telescopes for driving, microscopic systems for reading and computer use, electronic vision systems and the new "Systems of Sight, Maculens" allow our patients to maintain their independence. Our new Low Vision Resource Center carries a full line of hand-held and stand-magnification systems. The general public can view them without appointment. People with Macular Degeneration and other conditions that cause legal blindness can be helped.

University of Michigan Health System
Low Vision and Vision Rehabilitation Services
W.K. Kellogg Eye Center
1000 Wall Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
(734) 764-5106
www.kellogg.umich.edu

Many people who struggle with low vision are not aware that there are ophthalmologists, optometrists, and rehabilitation specialists with special training in low vision. The Low Vision and Vision Rehabilitation Services Team includes Dr. Donna Wicker, O.D., and Dr. Sherry Day, O.D., working cooperatively with our occupational therapist.

Because of our multi-disciplinary approach, the UM Kellogg Eye Center Low Vision and Vision Rehabilitation Services Clinic can tailor its services to the unique needs of each individual. Our doctors monitor remaining vision closely, prescribing the corrective lenses that are best suited to each vision problem. Our occupational therapist works with patients, at home when possible, to make the home environment more useful to the patient. The low vision team teaches patients how to use adaptive devices and make better use of their remaining vision to assure they are functioning well in their daily lives.

ORTHOTICS/PROSTHETICS

University of Michigan Orthotics and Prosthetics Center
2850 S. Industrial Hwy, Suite 400
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 973-2400
www.med.umich.edu/pmr/op

Since the first orthoses were fabricated in 1912, the University of Michigan Orthotics and Prosthetics Center has been providing comprehensive services to clients from the University of Michigan Health System and to clients referred directly by their physicians. A physician prescription is required for all services. Orthotists provide a full range of pre-fabricated and custom orthotic services. We also have a full range of soft good and post-mastectomy products in our “Personal Touch” program. Our pedorthists design, fabricate, fit and modify shoes and foot orthoses. And finally, our prosthetic team designs and fabricates a prosthesis that is most appropriate for individuals’ needs (both physiological and psychological). Please stop by and meet our ABC board-certified and registered staff members in our ABC and JCAHO-accredited facility.

PHILANTHROPY

Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation
301 S. Main Street, Suite 300
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 663-0401
www.aaacf.org

To build a strong community requires a strong foundation. At the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (AAACF) we harness the power of permanent endowment so that today’s charitable donations become tomorrow’s charitable legacy. We offer donors a variety of ways to help them meet their philanthropic goals, such as establishing a fund in honor of a loved one or to benefit a favorite nonprofit agency. Just ask the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living: for nearly 17 years, in honor of a loved one or to benefit a favorite nonprofit agency. Just ask the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living: for nearly 17 years, we have been providing infusion medications, nutritional therapy, specialty drugs, high-tech in-home nursing and care management services throughout Michigan. Our core staff of skilled pharmacists, nurses and dietitians is among the most experienced clinicians in the area.

AAACF: matching your philanthropic interests with community needs.

Expert Care Right Here

CHELSEA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

For information, please call us.

(734) 475-1311

Emergency Room

(734) 475-3960

Physician Referral Line

(734) 475-4050

Behavioral Health Services

(734) 475-4029

Chelsea Orthopedic Specialists

(734) 475-4029

Community Health Education

(734) 475-4103

Home Health Care

(734) 475-4190

Rehabilitation & Therapy Service

(734) 475-4085

www.cch.org

Chelsea Community Hospital
775 South Main Street
Chelsea, Michigan
## Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

**Associates in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation**  
5333 McAuley Drive, Suite R5106  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
(734) 434-6660  
(800) 767-3336

Affiliated with St. Joseph Mercy Health System, we are board-certified physicians providing comprehensive rehabilitation services across the continuum of care. We treat a wide range of disabling conditions, including back, work and sports injuries, stroke, traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries and pain. Offices in Ann Arbor, Brighton, Plymouth/Canton. EMG, Acupuncture, and IME services.

**Chelsea Rehab, Chelsea Community Hospital**  
775 S. Main St.  
Chelsea, MI 48118  
(734) 475-4102  
www.cch.org

Chelsea Rehab specializes in the inpatient and outpatient treatment of people who have had a stroke or traumatic brain injury, as well as patients with orthopedic, musculo-skeletal and other neurological disorders. Comprehensive outpatient programs for people with hand injuries, sports injuries, orthopedic conditions and spinal disorders are provided by Occupational and Physical Therapists in the new CCH Wellness Center (734-475-3947). Visit our web site at www.cch.org.

## The Recovery Project

**37650 Professional Center Drive**  
**Suite 105A**  
**Livonia, MI 48152**  
**(734) 953-1745**  
**www.therecoveryproject.net**

The Recovery Project, with outpatient rehabilitation centers located in Livonia and Clinton Township, Michigan provide innovative treatments for individuals with spinal cord, brain injury and other neurological injuries or diseases. Our clinics are located in existing fitness centers providing individuals the transition from rehabilitation to community fitness and health programs. We utilize the highest qualified clinicians in the areas of physical and occupational therapy and personal training. Our clinics have state of the art equipment including: stim bikes, body supported treadmills, arm and leg ergometers, vitaglide, standing frames and various strengthening/resistive machines.

**We offer the following recovery programs:**
- Traditional therapy
- High intensity therapy
- Home and community-based therapy
- Lifelong fitness programs

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We welcome new customers!
University of Michigan Health System
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Model Spinal Cord Injury Care System
300 N. Ingalls
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
Phone: (734) 936-5492
Fax: (734) 763-0971
E-mail model_sci@umich.edu
Web: www.med.umich.edu/pmr/modelsci

The University of Michigan’s Model Spinal Cord Injury Care System is a medical care and research effort, in partnership with the Center for Independent Living, to improve outcomes for individuals with Spinal Cord Injuries. As a Model SCI Care System, UM is able to offer not only outstanding clinical services, but also to support cutting-edge research and ongoing education to consumers and their families – keeping it in the forefront of SCI care. The UM Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation has 5 certified physicians specializing in care of individuals with SCI – the largest of any hospital in Michigan. Please refer to our website for more information on clinical, education and research activities.

University of Michigan Health System
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Pediatrics
325 E. Eisenhower Parkway
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Phone: (734) 936-7175
Fax: (734) 615-6716
http://www.med.umich.edu/pmr

The University of Michigan Pediatric Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation program provides both outpatient and inpatient services to children and adolescents with physically disabling conditions such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, brachial plexus injuries, amputations, brain injuries, spinal cord injuries and muscular dystrophy through the comprehensive pediatric rehabilitation team of physicians, therapists, and psychologists.

The University of Michigan Health System
Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, The Spine Program
325 E. Eisenhower Parkway
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Phone: (734) 996-6550 or (800) 254-BACK
Fax: (734) 615-1770
www.med.umich.edu/pmr/spine

The University of Michigan Health System Spine Program is a multidisciplinary team of experts that strives to improve the health and productivity of individuals with spine disorders. The mission of the Spine Program is to become a national leader in spine care through synergy of excellence in clinical service, research and education; and to provide a comprehensive, patient-centered service that addresses the controllable factors influencing the health and productivity of persons with spine disorders. Numerous assessment and treatment options are offered to individuals with acute, subacute and chronic back disorders. These include diagnostic, general medicine, surgical and rehabilitation interventions, delivered by a team of physiatrists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and exercise specialists.

RECREATION & FITNESS

The Ann Arbor YMCA
400 West Washington Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103
(734) 996-9622
www.annarborymca.org

For people with special physical needs, the Ann Arbor YMCA offers a Sci-Fit Ergometer, four Nu-Steps, an elevated stretch bench and several weight training accessories that can be utilized from a seated position. Slower-paced exercise classes with seated options and one-on-one training options are also available. Our Aquatics Center features a zero-depth entry pool and a six-lane 25-yard lap pool, plus a portable lift for use with either pool. We have shower benches in our adult locker rooms and individual changing rooms for those needing assistance or wheelchair space. On-site parking, including disabled parking, is available for members.

Adaptive Sports Coalition
2845 Crooks Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48309
(248) 829-8318
www.adhof.org

As part of the official organizational structure of the Athletes with Disabilities Hall of Fame, the Adaptive Sports Coalition is a group of community-based smaller organizations that support sports and recreation programs for the disabled throughout the state of Michigan. By hosting awareness clinics and training events in local communities, the Coalition helps people better understand the recreational opportunities available for people with disabilities. The Coalition specializes in activities such as wheelchair basketball, tennis, air rifle, track and field, sled hockey, water and snow skiing, hand cycling, adaptive golf, and baseball.

Athletes with Disabilities Hall of Fame
2845 Crooks Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48309
(248) 829-8318
www.adhof.org

Created in 1999 by Tony Filippis, Sr. of Wright & Filippis, the ADHOF celebrates the athletic achievements and community service accomplishments of people with disabilities. The alumni group of more than 50 individuals and teams represents more than 20 different adaptive sports. Alumni represent various disabilities, including Amputees, Cerebral Palsy, Developmentally Disabled, Little People, Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis, Spinal Cord Injury, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visual Impairment. Current programs include The No Limits Mentoring Program, which sends alumni members into local schools, and churches to present motivational speeches and the Adaptive Sports Coalition, a group of community based smaller organizations that support sports and recreation programs for the disabled.
Michigan Sports Unlimited, Inc.
1915 Fordney Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
(989) 771-5530

Michigan Sports Unlimited, Inc. (MSU) recognizes the value of sports and recreation in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Our mission is to educate, instruct, and provide unlimited access to a wide range of recreational activities in order to improve the physical, social, and mental well-being of individuals with disabilities and ultimately empower them to achieve success.

Michigan Sports Unlimited gives individuals with disabilities an opportunity to become active — socially and physically; and ultimately to empower them to achieve success in many areas of their lives, simply by showing them that "It can be done!" The list of pros is endless... there are no cons. Many of the individuals utilizing this organization have been stagnant in various parts of Mid- and Lower Michigan for years due to the unavailability of recreational opportunities. By the same token, it will provide newly-injured individuals, both young and old, not only a glimmer of hope for the future, but a brightly lit path to health and well being.

Michigan Sports Unlimited will enable those with "limited" abilities to have:
• Unlimited access
• Unlimited possibilities
• Unlimited opportunities
• Unlimited amount of recreational activities

Please contact us with any questions: (989) 771-5530. Thanks for your support!!

Jeff Coupie, Program Director

Michigan Thunderbirds Wheelchair Sports
2568 Packard Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 971-0277 x33
Email: tbirds@aacil.org
Web: www.michiganthunderbirds.org

The Thunderbirds promote competitive sports opportunities for athletes with disabilities. We have an adult and two junior wheelchair basketball teams and are active in handcycling, waterskiing, and other sports. When not competing, the T-Birds put on basketball and hand-cycling demonstrations for school or community organizations. Players are available to speak about their daily experiences of living with a disability, emphasizing the benefits of active participation in sports and promoting recreation and well-being for all people including those with disabilities.

Contact Glen Ashlock at (734) 971-0277 x33 or Tbirds@aacil.org.

Programs to Educate All Cyclists
32 N. Washington Suite 1
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
info@bikeprogram.org
www.bikeprogram.org

Programs to Educate All Cyclists' purpose is to enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities by using cycling for transportation, integrated recreation, fitness, and therapy.

PEAC helps individuals with cognitive, physical, and emotional disabilities reach their cycling goals by providing basic skills programs, family rides, participating in cycling club rides, bicycle commuter training, mechanical skills, and spinning classes. In addition, PEAC strives to integrate cyclists with disabilities into the mainstream cycling community by giving them the skills necessary to participate in tours, races, and bicycle club rides.

TRANSPORTATION AND RENTALS

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority
2700 S. Industrial Hwy.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 996-0400
TDD (734) 973-6997
Web: www.theride.org

The AATA provides safe, convenient and efficient public transportation services and specialized services for persons with disabilities and seniors in the greater Ann Arbor area. Bus route and schedule information is available by phone at (734) 996-0400 or (734) 973-6997 (TDD), at the AATA website: www.theride.org and in alternative formats by request. For information or an application for specialized service, call (734) 973-6500.

Aegis Health Perspectives, Inc.
Woodwinds Office Center
20270 Middlebelt Road, Suite 1
Livonia, Michigan 48152
www.aegishp.com

The Spinal Cord Injury Home Care Specialists
Michelle Kalous, RN • President/CEO
Phone (248) 615-1730 • Fax (248) 615-1830
Email: michelle@aegishp.com

iRide 2008
Cerebral Palsy Alliance
Thursday through Sunday
August 7 - 10, 2008

"iRide is a great family event and a personal challenge."

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iride@aacil.org
734.971-0277
www.independenceRide.org
AATA A-Ride
2700 S. Industrial Hwy.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 973-6500
Web: www.theride.org

A-Ride is a shared-ride, demand-response, public transportation service for individuals whose disability prevents them from riding the regular fixed-route buses. Trips are provided using lift-equipped vehicles and taxi cabs. A-Ride service is provided within 3/4 of a mile from regular fixed routes in the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti plus Pittsfield, Superior and Ypsilanti townships. The fare is $2.00 per trip by advance reservation or $3.00 for same-day service, and can be paid with cash or pre-purchased scrip tickets. Applications for the A-Ride program are available on the AATA website: www.theride.org, by calling (734) 973-6500, or by visiting AATA’s main office at 2700 S. Industrial Hwy., or the Blake Transit Center, 331 S. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor.

AATA Travel Training
2700 S. Industrial Hwy.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 677-3948

The Travel Training program helps individuals with disabilities learn to ride the fixed-route bus system to best meet their transportation needs. Individualized training is free of charge, so climb aboard and “Learn Your Wheels.” Call for information or to enroll.

Jet Set Travel
8233 Allen Rd, Allen Park, MI 48101-1401
Phone: (313) 382-1800
Fax: (313) 382-6033
E-Mail: Steven.Hill@hill-industries.com

Jet Set Travel is a proud provider of travel services to the Thunderbirds basketball team. We have staff onsite that specialize in all areas of both domestic and international travel. Call one of our agents when planning your trip of a lifetime!

The People’s Express Transportation
(734) 216-6073

People’s Express Transportation is a transportation program of Northfield’s Human Services in Washtenaw County. To schedule a ride, call (734) 216-6073. We transport people in Washtenaw and parts of Livingston and Oakland counties. Please call 24 hours in advance. Our buses and vans are all lift equipped. We have a team of experienced and caring drivers. Ask about our special programs that may qualify you for rides at $1.00 each way by simply filling out a few forms.

Rehab Transportation
5570 Whittaker Road PO Box 970286
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
(734) 482-0506 or (800) 306-6406

Rehab Transportation offers personalized, attentive and expert transportation for persons with special needs throughout Southeastern Michigan. Vehicles featuring hydraulic lifts with 800 lb. capacity, and 4-point tie-down with seat belts are available. We are also available to transport small groups including multiple wheelchairs. All drivers are professionally trained caregivers, so assistance with personal care tasks before and after transportation is also available. Insured and registered with the State of Michigan. Contact us for all your transportation needs.
Select Ride, Inc.
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
(734) 663-5959
TDD/TTY (734) 663-5994

Select Ride is pleased to offer accessible transportation through its Arbor Limousine division at no extra charge. We have fully accessible lift vans available for point-to-point transfers or hourly service. Non-accessible service is also available via your choice of taxicabs, vans, town car sedans, minibuses, or limousines. We go anywhere...whether you need a trip across town, to the airport — wherever you need to go! For more information or to schedule your next trip, please call Arbor Limousine at 663-5959.

Wheelchair Getaways
6005 Carscadden Way
Highland, MI 48357
(800) 887-7868

Serving the state of Michigan for fifteen years, Wheelchair Getaways rents vans by the day, week, or month to persons with disabilities. Our vans include full-size conversion vans with raised-roof, raised-door, and side-door entry. Our minivans are equipped with a dropped floor, kneeling system, and power side-door ramp. All vans have tie downs for the wheelchair and tie downs for the chair user. Some of our vans are equipped with hand controls, power transfer seat for the driver and power doors.

University of Michigan Home Care Services
Wheelchair Seating Service
2850 S. Industrial Highway, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 971-8286 or (877) 868-8889

The UMHS Wheelchair Seating Service provides evaluations and mobility equipment for complex seating and mobility needs. We offer a complete line of seating services including custom seating and positioning, and complex power mobility devices at affordable prices.

"I'm afraid, Sylvia, that his care will be very expensive. However, Medicaid protects the wife of a nursing home resident. You should talk to an attorney with experience in financing long-term care as soon as possible."

John B. Payne, Attorney
1800 Grindley Park Street 6 • Dearborn, MI 48124
313.543.4900 • Fax 313.562.3340
www.law-business.com

Nursing home costs can exhaust a middle-class couple's investments, but you can save your savings. If your spouse is in a nursing home, planning can make the difference between maintaining your standard of living and living in poverty. Consult a competent and reputable estate-planning attorney before it is too late!
YES! I want to support the mission of the AACIL.

Enclosed is my gift of: ☐ $10 ☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $250 ☐ Other $__________

Please make check payable to: AACIL.

Or charge my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard (Write card number below.)

Signature: ___________________________________________ Exp. date: ____________________

☐ My company’s matching gift form is enclosed.

Donor information:

Please print your name as you wish to be acknowledged.

Name/s: __________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________

City: ______________________________________________

State: __________________________ ZIP: ______________

Phone: ( ) ______________________

E-mail: __________________________________________

☐ Check here if you wish to remain anonymous

Thank you for your support. It truly makes a difference!

Please send me information on the following:

☐ Corporate sponsorship ☐ Planned giving, wills & bequests

☐ Volunteer opportunities ☐ John Weir scholarship endowment fund ☐ Transformation Society

☐ Innovation Society

Gifts to the Center for Independent Living are tax-deductible. The AACIL is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, nonprofit/MI CS9599.

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Annual Gift Options

If you wish to make an annual gift of $500 or more using multiple contributions, please complete the following:

I would like to make an AACIL investment of:

☐ $500 ☐ $1,000 ☐ $2,500 ☐ Other $________

☐ Yes, I would like to increase the impact of my gift by making a multi-year commitment for ________ years

and a total contribution of $__________

Enclosed is my first contribution of $__________

Optional payment plans are available.
Greater independence is right outside your door with AATA. We offer reduced-fare ID cards and door-to-door transit service for ADA-eligible individuals. We’ll even help you learn to get around through our Travel Training program. So whether you opt for fixed-bus service or one of our specialized services, AATA provides safe, efficient transportation — and better mobility for you. For more information, call 734.973.6500, or visit www.TheRide.org.
Ford’s Mobility Motoring Program keeps people on the go.

To a person with a disability, the Ford Mobility Motoring Program can mean the difference between staying home and getting to work.

It offers financial reimbursement of up to $1,000 toward the cost of adaptive equipment for Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles.

The Program also offers up to $200 on alert hearing devices for people with hearing impairments, aftermarket lumbar support seats and running boards on Ford, Lincoln or Mercury new vehicle purchases or leases.*

Equipment like lifts and ramps help open horizons and allow participation in events that may have been impossible for persons with disabilities until now.

Whether you choose a Ford, Lincoln or Mercury vehicle, you’ll find almost all are accessible and adaptable. The Program also provides guidance in finding the right adaptive equipment supplier. To learn more and to get started toward financial assistance right away, visit www.fordmobilitymotoring.com or call 1.800.952.2248 or TTY 1.800.833.0312.

*Options available for factory installation, such as air conditioning, running boards, lumbar support and power windows are not considered eligible under the terms of the Ford Mobility Motoring Program. See your local Ford or Lincoln Mercury dealer for complete details.

www.fordmobilitymotoring.com