



Alliance for Freedom News

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November 2003 E-Newsletter

Welcome to the first issue of the Center for Self-Determination e-newsletter. The newsletter is offered as a part of your membership with the Center for Self-Determination or in affiliation with your subscription to AccessAbilities. Please follow the link at the end of this page if you would like to receive the e-newsletter by Email. This e newsletter is being brought to you by Jack Enterprises.

www.empowering-alternatives.com Jack Enterprises was founded out of a passion for creating empowering alternatives for people rather than systems and programs that control and limit options by Kristin Smith. Kristin worked in the field of Community Mental Health in Michigan since 1986 as a registered Social Worker and recently left to try to find a different way to promote change in the system. Her experience has been primarily working with individuals who experience developmental disabilities and mental illness in residential and vocational facilities, and in support coordination. Kristin is consulting with the Center working with Pat Carver on special projects. Please welcome her! krismth@hotmail.com

Immersion Learning about Self-Determination

The Center for Self-Determination is putting the final scheduling touches on the third annual Immersion Learning about Self-Determination. Hosted in partnership with the Georgia Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, this thorough learning opportunity will be held at the Embassy Suites Centennial Olympic Park, downtown Atlanta, April 28 - May 1, 2004. Extensive sessions concerning alternatives to guardianship and developing systems of the future where people with disabilities are able to waive rules within Social Security and Medicaid regulations are planned. A close look at self-determination for individuals with psychiatric disabilities is also scheduled. Unique to this immersion learning is the planning stream. This opportunity is arranged at the requests of many Councils on Developmental Disabilities in the southern United States. Wanting to go beyond the rhetoric of the self-determination movement, Councils asked for specific direction in changing systems of support for citizens

with disabilities. Therefore this Planning Stream is specifically for organized groups who are ready to begin or accelerate implementation of self-determination in their states, localities or agencies. With the guidance of experts who have truly implemented self-determination, the outcome of this stream of immersion learning will be Blueprints for Implementation. Foundation Stream of learning for those who are new to the movement or who wish to up-date their understanding of the fundamentals of self-determination and develop individual plans will be offered. Registration fee for three days of Immersion Learning and intensive planning, valuable written materials organized for easy use; professional planning facilitation with 3 lunches, daily refreshment breaks, plus an opening reception is \$350 up until March 31, 2004. After this date, registration is \$400. Attendance is limited to ensure quality within the sessions and their outcomes. For more information contact Kris Copeland at the Center for Self-Determination 734-213-5220 or visit website www.self-determination.com Immersion Flyers available for printing and distribution are accessible by linking to www.self-determination.com/pdf/immersionflier73.pdf

Psychiatric Disability and Self-Determination

The University of Illinois at Chicago National Research and Training Center on Psychiatric Disability hosted an invitational meeting for leaders in the psychiatric disability movement on self-determination October 2nd and 3rd. With support from NIDRR (US Dept. of Ed.) these two days were designed to create a blueprint for implementing self-determination for those with psychiatric disabilities. Center Director, Tom Nerney, was commissioned to develop a paper on a policy and financing agenda for this population. His paper, *The Promise of Self-Determination for Persons with Psychiatric Disabilities*, will be available on November 14th and will be soon posted on the Center website. www.self-determination.com

INFO ON STATES

Colorado and New Mexico

Mid October found Nerney spending two days each in New Mexico and Colorado assisting with planning efforts on these states beginning to change their systems to support self-determination. These initial efforts have strong support from Center members in both states and the backing of the State Arc's led by Rebecca Shuman in New Mexico and Bill Baesman in Colorado. Michael Allen continues his support for these efforts with the self-advocacy movement in both states as well.

Connecticut

The Olmstead Coalition invited Nerney to present on *The System of the Future* in late October. A slightly revised edition of this paper is now available on the Center website. Negotiations continue with the Social Security Administration and CMS on important features of this system

change. For revised System of the Future paper visit: www.self-determination.com/publications/systemfuture1.html

Florida

A \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will fund the Florida Freedom Initiative, a project aimed at promoting the concept of consumer-directed care. The Department's Developmental Disabilities Program Office, in partnership with the Agency for Health Care Administration, will request a Social Security waiver as well as an expansion of the Independence Plus Medicaid waiver to cover about 1,500 individuals. The move is intended to increase individuals' control of public funds for long-term support needs, and promote employment, home ownership and financial independence without jeopardizing their eligibility for both Medicaid and Social Security Income benefits. The pilot is a cooperative effort between DCF, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, the Center for Self-Determination, the Southern Movement for Independence the Agency for Health Care Administration, the Department of Elder Affairs, and the Department of Health. www.self-determination.com/states/florida/index.html

Ohio

In an attempt to move self-determination to all 88 counties in Ohio, the Center has been hired to provide training and technical assistance to these counties. Center members including Dennis Harkins, Dan Rossiter and others from Dane County, Wisconsin will be teaming up with counties and starting 6 regional training sessions in early November. October was marked with an overflow attendance at the second kick-off for self-determination. Tom Nerney spoke and later led a discussion on developing a "rule template" or set of principles to guide all future rule-making in Ohio to make sure it is consistent with self-determination. This is one of the products called for in the Center contract. For more information contact Dennis Harkins:

DWHarks@aol.com

Michigan

The first year of the Michigan Academy on Self Determination finished on an enterprising note. Doreen Rosimos, of Income Links out of New Hampshire, worked individually with each participant to develop ideas on micro enterprise development. Evaluations indicate that this hands-on academy developed by the Arc of Midland and the Center for Self-Determination is extremely helpful to those in attendance. The second year begins in January with participants coming with support "teams" from all across the state.

The Center for Outcome Analysis and the Center for Self-Determination is working with the Michigan Council on Developmental Disabilities on a project "Re-inventing Quality" that will closely examining what is being measured in quality of life

assessments. Most major approaches began firmly mired within disability thinking, rather than universal human wants and aspirations. This project hopes to begin to clarify the essential distinction between "quality of life" and "quality of service". Watch for more information on both projects at www.self-determination.com/states/michigan/index.html

Center Website

The Center for Self-Determination web site is officially Bobby Approved.

Bobby is a comprehensive web accessibility software tool designed to help expose and repair barriers to accessibility and encourage compliance with existing accessibility guidelines.

bobby.watchfire.com/bobby/html/en/index.jsp

State Pages

Recent state pages on the website to receive updates this Fall are: Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Florida and Michigan. If you have information to share on your state web page, please contact Kris Copeland kcopeland@twmi.rr.com