

The Whole Person

People with Disabilities Leading Independent Lives

ADVOCACY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Kansas and Missouri advocates fought long and hard during the recent legislative sessions against deep budget cuts that would reduce the ability of people with disabilities to live independently in their own homes. Both states experienced huge revenue decreases in 2010, and legislators had to find ways to either cut services or increase revenues.

In Missouri the legislature attempted to limit care hours on the Consumer Directed Services (CDS) program to one hundred per month per person. The cap would have affected most of the CDS participants at The Whole Person, and many would have been at risk of going into a nursing home. Advocates from The Whole Person and other Missouri Centers for Independent Living opposed this provision, and legislators dropped the proposal.

However, legislators passed other changes to the CDS program. Missouri will contract with a private company to do intake for services, instead of allowing organizations like The Whole Person to do initial assessments. Legislators believe the change will save money by denying services and giving less time for personal care. Advocates are concerned that people will not get the services they need.

In Kansas, 65 people died while on waiting lists for personal care services and Medicaid reimbursements were cut by ten percent, forcing some durable medical equipment providers to stop providing wheelchairs and other mobility aids. The Whole Person, along with Kansas Centers for Independent Living, advocated against the cuts. Legislators heard the advocates and passed a tax increase that will restore Medicaid reimbursements, add funding for Centers for Independent Living and add funds

for personal care in July.

Advocates worked together to show legislators that we will not stand by and lose our right to live independently with freedom and dignity in our own homes. We called, emailed and wrote letters to our legislators. We visited them in person at every opportunity. We made them understand how people with disabilities would be affected by their decisions.

Let's all take a bow for a very successful effort: The Whole Person Board, staff and volunteers; our allies among the other disability rights groups; and above all, you! - *David Robinson, Executive Director of The Whole Person*



THE WHOLE PERSON HOSTED A PUBLIC HEARING FOR LOCAL CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES TO TALK ABOUT HOW THE DEVASTATING MEDICAID CUTS HAVE AFFECTED THEIR LIVES.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

If you are someone that wants to:

- Work from home or at one of our 4 locations.
- Have flexibility with your time.
- Have your efforts show positive outcomes in the lives of people with disabilities.
- Build up your resume.
- Have a say in the public policies that effect persons with disabilities.
- Expand on your talents or learn something new.

Call The Whole Person at 816.561.0304
Or email mmahoney@thewholeperson.org

- Sort out old case files for archiving or shredding.
- Be a part of the "Get Out the Vote" project.
- Have a say and get involved in our Legislative Education Projects.
- Share what you have learned and become a peer mentor.
- Help our staff provide more direct services by assisting with data entry or general clerical duties.
- Stay young at heart and chaperone our youth activities.
- Support people with disabilities to help keep their pantries full, become a driver to pick up and deliver discounted food.
- Help make our community accessible. Join our ADA survey team.
- Be a member of our phone bank.
- Join our Speakers Bureau and help further our mission.

Please consider making a gift to The Whole Person and returning it in the enclosed envelope.

Your gift is fully tax-deductible and will help us maintain our high level of service to people facing the challenges posed by disabilities.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

The Whole Person wishes to acknowledge the generosity of the following people. Thank you for believing in us.

GEORGE AND ANDREA BEARD

KEVIN AND RENAE QUINN

H. LON SWEARINGEN

WELCOME NEW STAFF!

SEAN HOULIHAN
Assistive Technology Specialist

MARY LUCAS
Receptionist

BRENDA PHILPOT
Executive Secretary

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
**ADVERTISING IN
THE WHOLE PERSON
NEWSLETTER**
CONTACT US AT
newsletter@thewholeperson.org
or call Karen Neal at
816.627.2230

The Whole Person

People with Disabilities Leading Independent Lives

The Whole Person assists people with disabilities to live independently and encourages change within the community to expand opportunities for independent living.

To find out more, please contact us at one of the following locations:

KANSAS CITY, MO

3420 Broadway, Suite 105
Kansas City, MO 64111
phone 816.561.0304
fax 816.753.8163
toll free 800.878.3037

INDEPENDENCE, MO

11015 E. 39th St., Suite 25
Independence, MO 64052
phone 816.358.5310
fax 816.358.2036
toll free 866.679.0125

PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KS

7301 Mission Rd., Suite 135
Prairie Village, KS 66208
phone 913.262.1294
fax 913.262.2392
toll free 877.767.8896

GLADSTONE, MO

310 NW Englewood Rd., Suite 410
Gladstone, MO 64118
phone 816.561.0304
fax 816.413.8707
toll free 800.878.3037

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SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUP

The Whole Person has developed a support group for people with disabilities in the LGBT community. If you are a person with a disability (intellectual, physical, behavioral, emotional) who is also lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or questioning, you are invited to participate in this monthly gathering. The goal of this group is to share information to address the needs and challenges faced by people with disabilities in the LGBT community.

This group is consumer-driven in that those attending will be able to provide each other with needed support, share community issues that concern them and offer possible solutions. The Whole Person will invite guest speakers to participate and share in the conversation as well as assist with setting up social events with those in the group.

For more information, contact Shelley Rogers, Community Outreach Coordinator at 816.561.0304 or srogers@thewholeperson.org

Connecting people with disabilities in the LGBT community to the support they need.

JOB CLUB OPENS DOORS

One tried-and-true strategy for securing employment is participation in a job club. A job club is more effective in landing a job than merely mailing out résumés or submitting online applications. According to Richard N. Bolles, author of the practical manual for job hunters and career changers "What Color Is Your Parachute", approximately 84 percent of job seekers find work utilizing this method.

The Whole Person's Job Club targets job seekers with disabilities in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area. John Wildman, Job Developer and Scott Vroegindewey, Employment Advocate co-facilitate each meeting, providing an excellent opportunity for networking with guest speakers and fellow job seekers.

In recent months, the Job Club has featured a number of guest speakers including: Brenda Whitlock, Training Coordinator with Missouri Assistive Technology; Susie Haake, former employee of Hallmark; Arthur Diaz, Director of the Culinary Cornerstones Career Training Program; and Drew Gilmore from Innovative Training Solutions.

Our guest speakers provide participants with valuable tools

CELEBRITY MENTORING

Marlee Matlin, widely known for her motion picture debut in "Children of a Lesser God" was the featured speaker at MOSCA's 35th Anniversary Celebration. Students with The Whole Person's Deaf Services Program enjoyed this opportunity to meet a celebrity role model in person.



PICTURED ABOVE FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE HANNAH MEHNER, JOANNE HARRIS, MARLEE MATLIN, EMILY HARNACKER, PATRICIA YOUNG, ANDREA VELAZQUEZ, EMILY OLSON, AND CHARILLA THOMAS. PARTICIPATION BY THESE STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE WHOLE PERSON.



to enhance their job searches. Participants are encouraged to offer suggestions for topics and speakers.

"The Job Club was very supportive," said successful job seeker, Annjanette Sanders. "It kept me motivated through my job search."

The Whole Person's Job Club is a venue for peers to share the challenges they have encountered in looking for employment opportunities in a difficult economic environment. Job announcements and other pertinent information are offered to job seekers as well.

For special accommodations, including transportation, materials in alternative formats and sign language interpretation, please contact us as soon as possible.

—Scott Vroegindewey,
Employment Advocate

JOIN US!
**The last Friday of
the month**
3:00 PM to 5:00 PM
**at KCPT (Kansas City
Public Television)**
125 East 31st Street
Kansas City, MO

HELPFUL RESOURCES

KCMO OFFICE ON DISABILITIES

Any person desiring a reasonable accommodation regarding any city service may contact the 3-1-1 Action Center. The Kansas City Missouri Office on Disabilities serves as a resource center, advocate for people with disabilities and adviser to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and all city departments. The office ensures that city services, programs and legislation address the needs of residents with disabilities.

The 3-1-1 Action Center is your central point of contact for city services. If you need information or have questions about the city, contact the Action Center by dialing 311. If you need to request a city service or report a problem with city services, contact the Action Center.

How to contact the Action Center:

- Call: 3-1-1 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays.
- Visit: First floor of City Hall weekdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- E-mail: actioncenter@kcmo.org.
- Mail: Send your report or request to:
Action Center, City Hall, First floor, 414 E. 12th St.,
Kansas City, MO 64106.



LENDING LIBRARY

The Whole Family Project works with families of children with communication disabilities. Our tutors go into the home and teach the whole family American Sign Language (ASL) as a communication aid. The tutors are very dedicated and creative on their own, but we like to have additional materials to enhance what they are doing.

We recently received several new materials for the benefit of our families. These materials include DVDs with flash cards, CDs and books; adult books on autism and ways to work with your child and understand the disability, coloring books in sign language and books that explain ASL. We have flashcards and story books in Sign Language (King Midas, Mother Goose rhymes, etc.) so parents can read to their child IN Sign and the child can see those signs in the book. Very exciting!

These materials are for the use of both our tutors and our families. They are available in the front office of our Broadway location. They are to be signed out and may be kept for up to two months. Enjoy! - Vicki Walker, The Whole Family Project

ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE?

The Whole Person is advocating for the civil rights and equality of people with disabilities by influencing and implementing legislation and policy at the local, state and federal level.

As a voter with a disability, you have the right to:

- cast a private, independent ballot at your polling place
- an accessible polling place
- vote from home if you choose.

For more information on voting and disabilities, contact your Election Board at the locations listed below or call The Whole Person at (816) 561-0304.

Missouri Election Boards
Kansas City 816-842-4820
Jackson: 816-325-4600
Platte: 816-858-4400
Clay: 816-415-8683
Cass: 816-380-8108

Kansas County Election Boards
Johnson: 913-782-3441
Wyandotte: 913-573-8500



BOARD OF DIRECTORS POSITION

We are looking for a few talented and conscientious volunteer board members. You are invited to apply or recommend board candidates who are:

- Passionate about our mission
- Willing to commit time for meetings and special events

Please contact Brenda Philpot
bphilpot@thewholeperson.org or 816.561.0304



SHOW ME LOANS

Financing to work from home! The Show-Me Loans for Telework is available to provide low interest loans for equipment needed by Missourians with disabilities for home based businesses. Individuals can be employed by others or be self-employed. Telecommuting and self-employment provide opportunities for disabled Missourians who want to work, yet need a more flexible work environment with their current position.

This loan provides funding for assistive technology or adapted equipment. It can also include any other type of equipment needed for home-based work, whether adapted or not.

For more information about the Show-Me Loans for Telework loan program contact: Eileen Belton at Missouri Assistive Technology, (800) 647-8557 or (816) 655-6702.

SERVICE ANIMALS, ETIQUETTE & ISSUES

People with disabilities are entitled to public access with specially trained service animals, usually assistance dogs. Assistance dogs are not required to wear any identifying equipment such as vests or harnesses, and their owners' disabilities may not be obvious. Businesses can ask if an animal is a service animal and what tasks it has been trained to perform that assist the person with a disability but are not permitted to ask questions regarding an individual's disability.

Assistance dogs (guide, hearing and service dogs) must be well behaved and well groomed, and the owner is responsible for any damage that might be caused by an assistance dog. Emotional support animals provide companionship much like pets and are not specially trained like assistance dogs. Sometimes, with appropriate documentation, emotional support animals are permitted to fly commercially with

their owners. People are also allowed to keep emotional support animals where pets may normally not be permitted to live.

It's always a good idea to ask before petting any dog, and even more so when you encounter a working team. It's okay to approach people with disabilities, to communicate with them, to ask if they need assistance or if it's all right to interact with their service animal. However, it is important to remember that distracting a working dog can jeopardize the team's ability to function safely and efficiently.

People with disabilities can and do live full lives, desiring to participate in all the same ordinary activities of work and play as people who are non-disabled. We just need reasonable accommodations like assistance dogs to help level the playing field. - *Sheila Styron, Public Policy Coordinator*



SERVICE DOGS LIKE GRETCH ARE TRAINED TO DO WORK OR PERFORM TASKS FOR THE BENEFIT OF AN INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY.

JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED

A personal story about health care cost-cutting measures and preferred drug lists

Health care cost-cutting measures currently being considered in both Missouri and Kansas include the creation of preferred drug lists. Preferred drug lists set forth the prescription medications that a doctor must prescribe in treating a disease. Only if a preferred drug fails can a doctor prescribe a drug not on the list. The list is intended to save Medicaid programs money by making doctors use older, less expensive drugs first before trying costlier newer drugs.

This is bad news for consumers, particularly where psychotropic medications are concerned. I was called upon to speak about preferred drug lists to members of the legislature in both states because of my experience as a consumer. The problem with the preferred drug list is that the doctors' hands are tied as to what medication they can prescribe. Consumers suffer needlessly while doctors try them on less effective drugs. People with mental illness remain mentally disabled, end up in a hospital for treatment or possibly find themselves in a jail cell.

If the doctor is not limited in the drugs he can prescribe it is more likely that the consumer will be able to receive treatment and hold a job. That was my experience. The medications I used initially didn't work for me and as a result I was on disability. When I was finally placed on medication that worked, I was eventually able to find work and contribute to the economy.

Preferred drug lists likely won't save the government money, leaving consumers to languish from the lack of appropriate medications. As a consequence they are more likely to need acute care. It is more costly to hospitalize or jail a mentally ill patient than it is to prescribe him the appropriate medication. Further, if a consumer is unable to work, tax revenues are lost and his spending power is diminished. It only makes good sense to enable doctors to prescribe the best medicines available. - *Tom Sweeny, Disability Rights Advocate*

BIG TENT COALITION

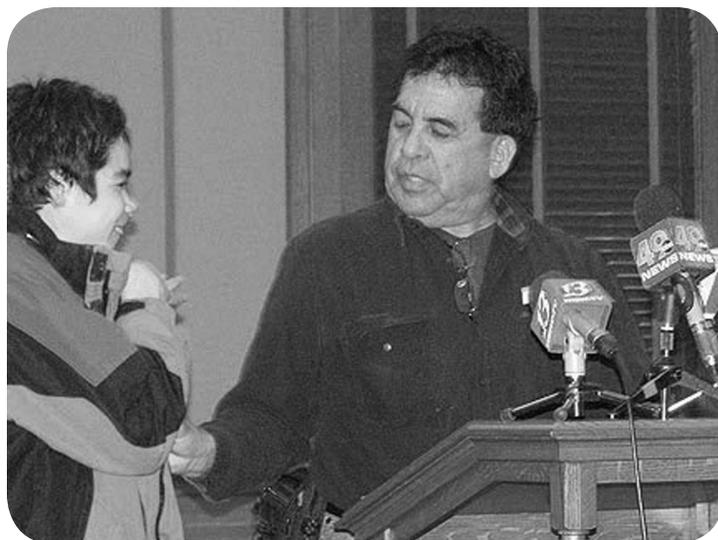
A sea of red filled a parking lot in downtown Topeka, Kansas as people gathered to participate in a legislative rally. Donning red t-shirts, members of the Big Tent Coalition huddled together. The group is a grassroots coalition of people with disabilities, seniors, friends, family members, advocates and service providers who share a strong set of core values such as respect, choice, independence, do no harm and consumer control. Some of the group's goals are to influence legislation, funding and policy to promote consumer choice, and to support accessible, affordable services.

What I witnessed was more than just sharing objectives and agendas. This group encompassed people with a passion for civil rights and a goal to affect major change and improvements in the lives of Kansans with disabilities, including persons with mental health disabilities.

A large chartered bus arrived to drop off a group of consumers, many using wheel chairs. About 100 people braved 45 mile-per-hour wind gusts to march about a mile, single-file, through the streets of downtown Topeka. The goal was to get to Memorial Hall, adjacent to the Capitol. Under the direction of a couple of enthusiastic coalition members, we shouted like a group of army recruits, "Hey, hey...ho, ho...budget cuts have got to go!" We marched with a serious message and shared interests -- to eliminate HCBS waiting lists, expand community capacity, increase funding for vital services, and to promote high-quality services, supports and staff for persons with disabilities.

Reporters and local TV crews scrambled to get a shot of the consumers in wheelchairs and kids passing out buttons, and to interview independent living workers and coalition members. As we neared the Capitol, police cars rolled up to assess the group.

Inside Memorial Hall we gathered for presentations by consumers telling their personal stories. A 5th grade girl pleads to legislators to not take away the medication and personal supports that she requires for her mental wellness. She talked about the challenges of entering



A single father and his son share the story of their struggles to cope with cuts in funding to Kansas' Home and Community Based Services.

puberty and coping with three diagnoses. She spoke with a maturity beyond her years and with sharp honesty. I couldn't help but give this young lady a standing ovation for her fearlessness and frank talk.

Another consumer discussed his fall from fame as a competitive body builder. He talked about his long-term battle with substance abuse and how his therapy and medication provided him the support he needed to survive and stay sober the past 5 years. He cautioned that things would only be getting worse. The cuts would result in a lot of angry people on the street.

Consumer after consumer shared their personal struggles and about how these cuts affect their families, their children and their lives. Sixty-five people have died on the waiting lists. This is the harsh reality and unfortunately these numbers will only increase.

Yet people are not without hope. Consumers and providers and children are banding together to save themselves and those who they provide care. Hope might just be the element that gets everyone through this tough time.

- Faye Skidmore, Manager, *Unserved and Underserved*.

HELP US SAVE A TREE!

Send your email address to: newsletter@thewholeperson.org

OPT OUT?

Would you prefer not to receive this newsletter?

NEW ADDRESS?

Do you have a change in your contact information?

Please let us know by contacting us at 816.561.0304 or newsletter@thewholeperson.org.

WORKING TOWARD A MORE ACCESSIBLE CITY

The Whole Person is building a cross disabilities task force to work with city hall on bringing Kansas City into compliance with the ADA. "Kansas Citians with disabilities say they are increasingly frustrated with what they see as city government's noncompliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act in this, the 20th year since the landmark law's passage," writes Lynn Horsley in a front page Kansas City Star article.

On February 20, Patrick Palmer and Sheila Styron, both people who are blind, testified at a city council budget hearing on the need for more accessible pedestrian signals, and as a result, thirteen more are scheduled for installation this summer. However, Kansas City still has a long way to go, with only a scant 11 APSs compared to San Francisco's approximately 690. From the May issue of Access World, "Accessible Pedestrian Signals are a vital component of any pedestrian safety program for people who are blind or have low vision."

At an April 21 town hall meeting, hosted by The Whole Person, Mayor Funkhouser agreed with the disability community's clearly stated position that Kansas City is woefully out of compliance with the ADA and invited everyone to storm city hall. This event, initiated by the mayor's office and The Whole Person's own Joseph Matovu, was moderated by Michelle Krajewski and focused media attention on the plight of Kansas City residents with disabilities, including spots on Fox 4 and the Channel 5 evening news. Again from Lynn Horsley's article, "Susie

Haake, who uses a wheelchair, questions why a Brookside curb ramp was removed when a new curb was installed, and why light poles block the middle of sidewalks at 43rd Street and Wornall Road."

With city officials and residents with disabilities working together, it looks like Kansas City will at long last have a transition plan, a roadmap to making the city ADA compliant which has been a requirement since the 1990 enactment of the ADA. "If we're 15 years behind in submitting a transition plan, the fault is on us and we've got to fix it," says city manager, Troy Schulte. - *Sheila Styron, Public Policy Coordinator*



MAYOR FUNKHOUSER AGREED THAT KANSAS CITY IS OUT OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The national health care reform package passed by the House on Sunday, March 21 included the Community First Choice (CFC) Option and other long term care-related provisions. These provisions bring people with disabilities across America one step closer to home and community-based supports and ending the institutional bias in Medicaid.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and its companion legislation, the Reconciliation Act of 2010, together include several items related to home and community based services. For example, starting in October of 2011, the CFC Option will give states the choice

of providing home and community based services to Medicaid recipients instead of simply forcing them into nursing homes. The federal Money Follows the Person program will be extended until 2016. Provisions of the Community Living Assistance Services and Support Act (CLASS) are also included in the new legislation. States will have increased federal funding matching incentives to fund community services.

While passage of this legislation is a social landmark, much remains to be done. Learn how you can advocate for yourself and others. Contact The Whole Person at 816.561.0304.

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People with Disabilities Leading Independent Lives

3420 Broadway, Suite 105 • Kansas City, MO 64111

www.thewholeperson.org

CELEBRATE THE

20th Anniversary

ADA

Striving for
Liberty, Justice &
Access for All

Americans with Disabilities Act

1990 - 2010

TWP-PUB-003 0710

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Stay in touch with us for more details on events like these!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

September 10, 2010



CAST 'N BLAST

Accessible Outdoor Sports Event

FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Advance registration (required) for this event will begin in August. Watch the mail for your invitation to this popular outdoor sporting event!

You are invited to participate in the

GREATER KANSAS CITY

DISABILITY MENTORING DAY EVENTS

Promoting employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities through job shadowing, hands-on career exploration and internships or employer relationships.

Friday, October 15, 2010 **Tuesday, October 26, 2010**

8:15am – 3:00pm

8:15am – 3:00pm

Mid America Nazarene

Ewing Marion Kauffman

University, Bell Cultural Center

Foundation Conference Center

2030 College Way

4801 Rockhill Road

Olathe, Kansas

Kansas City, Missouri

Registration deadline: Sept 30

Registration deadline: Oct 12

If you would like to participate in Disability Mentoring Day in any capacity please contact either:

Brian Ellefson
(913) 239-9776

Barney Mayse
(913) 262-1294

or by email
briman3@kc.rr.com

or by email
bmayse@thewholeperson.org

More info: www.dmd-kc.org