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July marks the celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a law that was enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1990. It was signed into law on July 26, 1990 by President George H.W. Bush and later amended with changes effective January 1, 2009.

The ADA is a wide-ranging civil rights law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. It affords similar protections against discrimination to Americans with disabilities as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which made discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, and other characteristics illegal. Disability is defined by the ADA as "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity." The determination of whether any particular condition is considered a disability is made on a case by case basis. Certain specific conditions are excluded as disabilities, such as current substance abuse and visual impairment which is correctable by prescriptions lenses.

On September 25, 2008, President George W. Bush signed into law the ADA amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA). This was intended to give a broader protections for disabled workers and "turn back the clock" on court rulings which Congress deemed too restrictive. To learn more about the Americans with Disabilities Act, please visit their website at www.ada.gov.

The National Council on Independent Living

The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) is the longest-running national cross-disability, grassroots organization run by and for people with disabilities. Founded in 1982 NCIL represents thousands of organizations and individuals including: Centers for Independent Living (CILs), Statewide independent living Councils (SILCs), individuals with disabilities, and other organizations that advocate for the human and civil rights of people with disabilities throughout the United States.

Mission: As a membership organization, NCIL advances independent living and the rights of people with disabilities through consumer-driven advocacy.

Vision: NCIL envisions a world in which people with disabilities are valued equally and participate fully. To learn more about NCIL, please visit their website at www.ncil.org.

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Independent Living Philosophy

By Pierre Ruffin

The idea that people who are disabled can take charge of their own lives and live independently surprises many people. It even surprises many people with a disability, but not us!

The Independence Center (TIC) was established in 1987 because there were no facilities in Colorado Springs to help people with disabilities become more independent and become assets to their community by promoting advocacy for themselves and others with disabilities. Power to the people! A popular slogan - but how do you get from rhetoric to reality? In Colorado, people with disabilities are giving power to themselves - personal empowerment - through their activities in Independent Living Centers (ILC's) such as ours.

The purpose of the independent living programs is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities and to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of American society. Independent living programs provide, expand and improve independent living services; we collaborate with statewide networks of centers for independent living; and improve knowledge and availability of statewide successful independent living programs.

We promote the I-CAN! philosophy and the belief that Independence is freedom!

Please join us for the ADA Picnic on July 29!

The ADA picnic will be held on July 29, 2011 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM at The Independence Center, 729 South Tejon. All consumers are invited at no cost. The event will be catered by The Texas Roadhouse.

We are celebrating this event with a 50's theme. Please wear your favorite costume reflecting this theme. We will have a prize for the best costume.

Please RSVP to Terri Wildman at 719-471-8181 by July 15.

Marge's Cafe

Marge's Café has now been open for about 2 years and has grown in business volume as well as in reputation for excellent customer service and availability. Our menu has also grown and changed since we started. The advantage of having our own Café is to be able to vary our menu according to our customer's needs. We can also make changes according to the seasons, such as, ice cream in the summer, hot chocolate in the winter, and other changes as needed. We have even included Otis Spunkmeyer cookies on our menu. 'Come on down'!

Housing First

Housing First Pikes Peak has been sharing office space at the Independence Center over the last year. It has been an excellent collaborative effort on both sides. Housing First places chronically homeless people with a mental health diagnoses and a history of substance abuse in local housing. Clients sign a lease on an apartment and receive assistance from HUD subsidies to pay rent. Housing First clients receive intensive case management to move towards self-sufficiency in improving their lives in the areas of medical, mental health treatment and recovery services. They also receive assistance in applying for Food Stamps, Aid to the Needy Disabled (AND), Social Security and many other things.

"Do not just say you will do good things for others, instead, silently live out the good things in other's lives, not for praise and fanfare, but because it is the *RIGHT* thing to do".
Anonymous.



Welcome Patricia Yeager, Interim CEO

Formerly the executive director of the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) in Sacramento, Patricia Yeager has had a distinguished career as an advocate for people with disabilities. She has been active in the independent living movement for 30 years, promoting access to higher education in Pittsburgh and Denver, shaping public policies, as well as developing and implementing services at Independent Living Centers (ILC) in Denver, Houston and San Diego.

Hearing impaired since the age of two, Patricia earned her M.S in Rehabilitation from West Virginia University, her home state. She has since gone on to serve on the Rehabilitation advisory council, State Independent Living Council, and State Developmental Disabilities council and Private Industry Council in several states.

Frequently active in statewide networks for independent living as well as higher education, she is particularly interested in building local and statewide coalitions of people with disabilities to work on public policy issues and services. After 8 years as Director of CFILC, she left to pursue her PhD studies in Human Rehabilitation at the University of Northern Colorado. During the time she has been working on her degree she has increased her consulting and training capacity. Patricia's research interests include assistive technology usage, knowledge translation models and people with disabilities and work. Patricia recently defended her dissertation and will graduate in August.

"My goal at The Independence Center is to modernize the organization including the systems by which we work, the Independent Living Center services, and our Home Health Services. With a few tweaks of training and an updated electronic infrastructure I can see The Independence Center being the role model for civil rights for people with disabilities seeking to create a satisfying life".

Welcome Courtney Beardslee

Independent Living Program Coordinator

Courtney comes to us with years of experience in the disabilities and nonprofit fields. New to The Independence Center, Courtney brings an interesting perspective of consumer care, services and advocacy with her based on years of experience, employment and education in the field. She is a Host Home Provider within the community for a consumer with a developmental disability and is passionate about consumer capacity for independence. Courtney graduated from Michigan State University in 2003 with a degree in Psychology and an emphasis in Health & Humanities and is currently working towards her Master's Degree at the University of Colorado in Counseling and Human Services. Courtney serves as the Independent Living Program Coordinator here at the center and is excited to be on the forefront of new and exciting changes that are taking place here.

Welcome Katie Zortman

Community Transition Specialist

Originally from Colorado Springs, Katie is coming to us from Durango where she worked at an assisted living center as well as several adult/adolescent mental health centers. Katie has experience in the non-profit world and has served on several boards and been the president of a community service club. Katie received a BA in Psychology, Sociology, and Molecular Biology last July and hopes to continue her education in the future. Katie accepted the position as the full time Community Transition Specialist this past month, and could not feel more blessed to have been given the opportunity.