**Rev Up the Disability Vote on November 6**

Vote as if your life depended on it. Justin Dart who is considered the father of the Americans with Disabilities Act, stated those words, and they are as true for people with disabilities now, as they have ever been. The reason is that people with disabilities are not voting enough. Only 16 million people with disabilities reported voting in the November 2016 elections. That means that only 55% of eligible voters with disabilities casted a ballot!

**Calling All Artists with Disabilities**

This fall, ACCESS to Independence will be holding its final 40th anniversary celebration event called Artists Beyond Boundaries. This event will take place on Thursday, October 25th, from 5:30-8:00pm, at the Concourse Hotel in Madison. ACCESS is seeking artists with disabilities to submit their work, from a variety of media. 50 works will be chosen for the event, with 12 being selected for a 2019 calendar.

**MORE INFO**

For more information, contact Tracy Miller at
**Phone:** (608) 242-8484, ext.227 or
**Email:** tracym@accesstoind.org

The application packet can be found on the ACCESS website at [www.accesstoind.org/news-events.html](http://www.accesstoind.org/news-events.html)

**Nothing “Fishy” About Our “Wurst”
Annual Fundraisers**

The 2nd annual Reel ACCESS to Real Independence event kicked off in May, and ended on August 9th, with our winner’s event. One lucky participant won $1,200 dollars from the split-the-pot raffle, several fish entries netted prizes, and the top three largest Bass entries landed prizes of $250, $100, and $50 for the respective anglers. We’ll be kicking off our 3rd annual event in February with a table at the 2019 WI Fishing Expo, which runs February 22-24, at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison. Our 7th annual Brat Sale on June 15th brought hundreds of hungry humans to the ACCESS parking lot for freshly-grilled bratwurst. The weather was perfect, and the crowd was steady. ACCESS thanks all those who came out to support our work with your purchase, and ACCESS is especially thankful to everyone who planned for, and worked at, this year’s event.

**40th Annual Community Picnic**

On June 21st, dozens of people braved the soggy trek to the dry confines of the Tenney Park Pavilion for a Community Picnic Celebration. This event was a chance for founders, friends, faculty, and others who are part of the ACCESS family, to reminisce about the accomplishments of the last forty years. The event included an historical timeline, remarks from community leaders, recognition from elected officials, soothing sounds from local musicians, and of course, food! ACCESS to Independence thanks everyone who came out to the event, shared stories, and especially to those who spent considerable time planning and providing this event.

**New Staff at ACCESS of Independence**

“My name is **Ben Hinkel**, and I’m an Independent Living Specialist and Youth Services Provider here at ACCESS. I’m 30 years old and married to a wonderful person named Lindsey. Our daughter Aisa just turned 1, and we have 3 dogs (Dewey, Daisy, and Darcy) and a cat (Vinnie). I first learned about ACCESS when I came here for a tour with my then classmates. I was very interested in the work that was being done, and luckily got to do my capstone internship here. Shortly after my internship ended, I graduated from the Occupational Therapy Assistant program at MATC and got an offer to work at ACCESS. I accepted, and I’ve been having a great time! If you see me in the office, feel free to say hello. I’m always up for a conversation about parenthood, video games, or Dungeons and Dragons!”

**Amber Fasula** is a relatively new Madison resident, who is very excited to join the Access team as their new Administrative Assistant! Amber received her Bachelor of Science degree from Carroll University in 2015 and since then has worked as a portrait studio photographer and Administrative Assistant for a local driving school. When she’s not at the office, Amber enjoys creative outlets such as music, painting, photography, and graphic design. She is very much looking forward to the new, exciting challenges Access to Independence will provide.

**WisLoan Makes the Outdoor Adventure
Possible Again**

Loreen and her husband share a passion for the outdoors. They actively hunt and fish, and love spending time outdoors with their dogs, children and grandchildren. When Loreen was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Multiple Sclerosis she began losing her mobility. She was able to get around with a walker but it was continuing to get more difficult to use if she was not on a flat and solid surface. She was losing her ability to do the things she loved, with the people she loved.

Loreen learned about Action Trackchairs, power wheelchairs that have tracks for wheels so that they are able to be all-terrain. Loreen knew the chair would be vital to help her get back outdoors with her family, but it was not affordable out-of-pocket. Loreen contacted Access to Independence and inquired about the WisLoan program.

The WisLoan program is an alternative financing program that allows Wisconsin residents with disabilities to finance assistive technology, home modifications, or other equipment, to improve independence.

A staff member from Access to Independence assisted Loreen with her WisLoan application and Loreen was approved! Loreen was able to purchase an Action Trackchair and is now spending time with her grandchildren and dogs in the great outdoors, like she always has!

**MORE INFO**

If you would like to know more about how the WisLoan program can work for you, call Access to Independence today at 608-242-8484!