



# Access Info



Volume 29 Issue 1

Winter 2010

## Our Mission

Access to Independence advocates and educates to support and empower people with disabilities.



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## 2010 Brings More Opportunities....

New Year, New Look! New Initiatives at Access to Independence (ATI). As we look into 2010, you will find ATI has a new LOGO. In choosing the LOGO, we thought about what came to mind when you hear the word access-open doors, keys and a lock. The new logo represents an open lock. The symbol also supports the agency's new mission which is to advocate and educate to support and empower people with disabilities.

The Board of Directors have been diligently working on a strategic plan for the agency

and spent many thoughtful hours along with staff in developing the Mission, Vision and Values for the organization. They will now begin identifying the goals and objectives. ATI is committed to increasing services to Columbia, Dodge and Green Counties. Staff will be available in each of the three counties to meet with individuals, family members and service providers.

ATI will also be looking to develop a grassroots network to promote input from the disability community to ensure that their viewpoints are considered when

addressing local, state and national issues that affect people with disabilities.

2010 represents a year of expansion and change. ATI will be looking to develop more services that benefit the individuals we serve. Outreach to Veterans, employment services and more. If you haven't had contact with Access for awhile you may want to contact us and talk to an IL Coordinator about how our services have changed. Stop in for a cup of coffee or tea!

...Dee Truhn  
Executive Director

## Access Community **POTLUCK**

**Thursday February 25, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.** Join us for food and fun at ATI, 301 S. Livingston St. Suite 200. Bring a dish to pass or a food pantry donation (dry food or canned goods) or consider making a small donation to ATI (suggested \$1.)

Staff will provide several entrees and beverages. Please RSVP to Claire Draeger by Friday, February 19 if you plan to attend, so we know how much food to bring.

If you need a Sign Language Interpreter or any

other accommodations to participate in this event, please let us know as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing you there!

**RSVP By January 19 to: 608-242-8484**

# ATI Board of Directors

The ATI Board of Directors encompasses a broad spectrum of dedicated individuals. The Board guides the growth and strategic planning of ATI.

Chris Hendrickson  
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Alex Henvey  
Treasurer

Cheryl Schiltz  
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Adrenna Squires

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Lorie Walker

Jake Wartenweiler

**ACCESS INFO** is published three times a year, Winter, Spring and Fall. Submissions of articles are always welcome.

They are subject to editing for clarity. Opinions expressed are the authors and do not represent Access to Independence, Inc. or its Funders.

**ACCESS INFO** is available in large print, Braille, CD and electronic format, by request. It can also be viewed on our website [www.accesstoind.org](http://www.accesstoind.org)

If you are interested in advertising, please contact ATI.



## ATI Staff Directory

**Dee Truhn**.....ext. 233  
Executive Director

**Claire Draeger**.....ext. 222  
Administrative Assistant/  
Receptionist

**Kirsten Engel**.....ext.228  
Youth Services Coordinator,  
Peer Power & AT Coordinator

**Geri Girard**.....ext. 238  
Finance Manager

**Jason Glozier**.....ext.236  
Independent Living Coordinator-Dodge County  
Outreach

**Marilyn Johnson**...Ext 226  
Intern - Administrative  
Assistant/Receptionist

**Matt Keller**.....ext. 230  
Independent Living Coordinator-Green County  
Outreach

**Tracy Miller**.....ext. 226  
Independent Living Coordinator-Columbia County  
Outreach

**Alice F. Pauser**.....ext. 224  
WI Peer Specialist Program  
Coordinator. Certified Peer  
Specialist (CPS)

**Denise Pulfer**  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Coordinator  
VP 866-948-8760  
TTY 608-242-8480  
Direct VP 608-234-4484

### ATI Office

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Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53703  
Phone: 608-242-8484  
Toll Free: 800-362-9877  
FAX: 608-242-0383  
Office Hours:8:30 am-4:30  
Monday through Friday

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### Independent Living Philosophy

The independent living (IL) philosophy is based on the idea that people have the right to make their own choices, manage their own affairs, and live as independently as they choose.

## 'New' ATI Independent Living Coordinators...

**Matt Keller [Green County]** is from La Crosse, Wisconsin and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Prior to arriving at ATI, Matt did volunteer and social work for a few years in Louisiana. Matt likes riding his bike around town, hiking, disc golf, and canoeing/kayaking. Matt's tasks include providing information and referral services to consumers, and developing outreach activities in Green County.

**Jason Glozier [Dodge County]** I have been involved

in the disability rights movement for over a decade now. My little brother was born with cerebral palsy, and at the time of his birth doctors informed my parents that he would not amount to anything and would be better off in an institution. Well, this didn't sit too well with them and from a young age they raised my brother and myself to believe that everyone has value, despite their level of ability. This is an ideal that has stuck with me, and been a central theme to my work my entire life. It is a belief I bring with me to my

new position at Access, and one that I hope will continue to shape the lives of others. Over time I have worked to create a sense of power and equality within and beyond the disability community. I have worked on several projects, including the "We HAVA Vote" project that spurred the Wisconsin vote coalition, the development of the Wisconsin Quality Home Care Authority, as well as being part of the IRIS advisory committee, and self directed personal care subcommittee of the Department of Health Services.

## 'Really New' Phone System...

Access to Independence now has a new phone system! YEA! And boy, did we need a new phone system. It has taken a few of us a little more time to get used to it than others, but it is up and running and is capable of some amazing new things,

like clear conference calling, easy to use voice mail, auto redial from voice messages, Caller ID and the capacity to retrieve messages off site. It is good to be able

better customer service and the ability to respond more quickly with information.

-Claire Draeger  
ATI Receptionist

*Who loves the new phone system!*



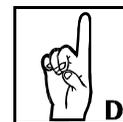
## 'New' Amputee Support Group...

This opportunity is brought to you through the work of Jason Cogshall, a volunteer at Access who is, himself, a recent amputee. A year ago Jason found himself in a life changing experience, when due to Diabetes he needed to have a leg removed. After the procedure he found

himself with little support, and a lot of questions. It has been a long road to recovery for Jason and it is his hope that by starting this group he can not only find some answers about how to deal with life as an amputee as well as impart some of the knowledge he has gained

over this past year. If you would like to take part in this group please feel free to contact Jason Glozier at Access to get added to the waiting list and be notified when the group will be starting. To sign up call Jason Glozier: 608-242-8484 ext. 236 or toll free at 1(800)362-9877

# Deaf and Hard of Hearing News...



## By Denise Pulfer

Access to Independence has been actively involved in the Deaf Community within our service area, hosting events and having fun.

Internet Safety and a police town hall were a few of the educational opportunities for deaf that Access to Independence set up. These are topics that the Deaf have asked to learn about so that they can live and work more independently. Internet Safety explained some of the privacy problems on several well

known social networking sites. The Deaf learned how to become more aware and yet still connect with friends.

Along with workshops Access to Independence has been working with the Madison police in training cadets on Deaf Culture. This will help police learn about communication access and prevent miscommunication in the future. This will be important when an emergency happens.

Access to Independence was involved with the Deaf Senior Citizen Halloween Party and

also hosted a Christmas party for Deaf/HOH families. We had over 50 people attend the Christmas party and everyone enjoyed Santa, signing songs & storytelling. It was a great community event. Although ATI is hard at work, there's room for fun, too.

ATI staff member, Denise Pulfer, is giving sign language lessons to other ATI staff on Wednesdays at 12:30 pm to expand their consumer communication skills.



## 2009 'Short Report'...

Ever wonder what Access to Independence Deaf Program does throughout the year?

Here is a short report on some of the Community projects ATI did in 2009...

1. Worked with over 40 Deaf in reaching goals they set for themselves.
2. Offered 6 educational workshops and 5 fun activities.
3. Worked with over 15 different agencies and companies to make their services accessible to the deaf community.
4. Went to the national capitol and state capitol to discuss issues regarding people with disabilities.

5. Served with Deaf Unity Hotline for the Wisconsin Deaf Community who need services for abuse. For further info: TTY: 888.256.9170 Email: deafunity@gmail.com

6. Educated the Madison Police and Madison Civil Liberties on Deaf culture.

Please let Denise know if you have any questions or comments about the Deaf/HOH Program. ATI looks forward to another year of serving the Deaf Community. Thank you!

**Denise Pulfer**  
**Deaf/HOH Coordinator**

Phone: 608 234-4484  
TTY: 608-242-8485 Toll Free: 866 948-9870  
denisep@accesstoind.org

Deaf/HOH  
Walking group  
Every Tuesday  
8-9:30am  
East Towne Mall  
\*\*\*  
Deaf Yoga  
Wednesdays  
Feb 17-April 21  
Cost \$40

Classes will be held at  
Our Savior Deaf Church  
3110 Dairy Dr. Madison

Please Join Us!



# Columbia County Outreach News...

**By Tracy A. Miller**

I am currently in charge of outreach activities in Columbia County, and have enjoyed visiting in many communities so far, to meet residents and share information about ATI's programs and services. I may have met you at Rio High School at the Transition Advisory Council's Agency Night, or at the Fall Festival in Columbus.

If you live in Columbia County



and would like to find out more about ATI's services, or have general questions about disability-related issues, I look forward to seeing you.

I will have regular office hours once a month at the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) at 2652 Murphy Road, Portage. Here are the upcoming dates and times I plan to be in Portage:

-Tues. February 23, 1 to 4 p.m.

-Tuesday, March 16, 1 to 4p.m.

-Tuesday, April 13, 1 to 4 p.m.

-Tuesday, May 11, 1 to 4 p.m.

Please call if you would like to meet with me. I am also available to provide training and presentations for groups, and to meet individually at other times to provide direct independent living services for people who live in Columbia County. Give me a call today!

Tracy A. Miller  
Independent Living Coordinator  
608-242-8484 ext. 227 or  
800-362-9877

# The Power of Stories...

**By Tracy A. Miller**

In the introduction to his book "The Call of Stories" (copyright 1989) the author, psychiatrist, and teacher Robert Coles quotes a doctor as once telling him: "The people who come to see us bring us their stories. They hope they tell them well enough so that we understand the truth of their lives. They hope we know how to interpret their stories correctly. We have to remember that what we hear is *their story*."

Over many years of working with people and hearing their stories, I have learned how powerful it is to be able to tell your story, and to be heard. Through the philosophy of peer support, I have also learned

how important it can be to share our own stories of struggle, of survival, of recovery, and of joy. It is our shared experiences that make up the history of the independent living movement, our movement.



In his book, Coles also illustrates how reading stories can change people's lives and attitudes. Do you have a favorite book that you remember reading that caused you to change the way you think about the world?

I have been collecting lists of books that touch on the experiences of people with disabilities. There are so many, and such a wide variety of sto-

ries. I also want to collect the stories of people's individual lives.

There are many people in our community who remember what it was like before the ADA, who remember what it was like to fight for its passage. Would you like to share your story of independent living with our readers?



Would you like to share a review of a book that you thought touched on your experience as a person with a disability, or changed how you thought about something? I am happy to help.

I want to hear *your story!*

## New Peer Power Program at Access...

By **Kirsten Engel**

Access has been awarded a grant from the Independent Living Council of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Board of People with Developmental Disabilities to develop a Madison Peer Power site! Peer Power is a unique peer-based program designed to help high school students with disabilities plan for their lives after high school. Members of Peer Power learn how to actively participate in planning their



future. They learn about jobs, college, social and recreational opportunities and other things their community has to offer.

Access is now accepting 10 students with disabilities who are high school freshmen or sophomore to be part of this unique program. The group will kick off in April with a teen retreat in the Dells and then meet once a month for the rest of the year. If you are interested in learning more about Peer Power or would like to become a member please call Matt at (608) 242-8484 x230.

### Recruiting Peer Mentors

Access is recruiting young adults to become peer mentors in our Peer Power program. Peer Mentors help by providing support to the youth in the program by sharing their life experiences and serving as role models. If you are young adult who has a few hours a month to share we could use your help! For more information call Jason at (608) 242-8484 x236.

Your skills and support can make a positive difference!

## Telecommunication Access Project...

The Telecommunication Access Project's purpose is to provide training to people with disabilities about technology related to telecommunications. Access staff is available to do presentations to community groups and to work with consumers to conduct assessments, demonstrate phones and assist people

in identify the assistive technology that best meets their needs. We now have 3 kits that we can use to demonstrate equipment. These kits are full of amplified phones, voice carry over phones, picture phones, pocket talkers, and signaling devices. Another part of this project is to provide co-pay

grants to individuals. If a person has a physical disability and is low income they may qualify for a \$100 co-pay grant to be used with a TEPP program voucher. ATI project funded by the Public Service Commission of WI. Universal Service Commission. Call Kirsten at (608) 242-8484

## WI Peer Specialist Certification...

In partnership with ATI, the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee has set up a web page for information on the PS Certification exam.

Individuals may download the application and guidelines. The packet contains eleven pages and gives detailed instructions

regarding the application process, including cost and necessary documentation.

Remaining 2010 exam dates are: March 10, June 9 and September 8. Exams are given **online** at the Wisconsin Independent Living Centers across the state.

Visit the UWM webpage at:  
[www.sce-peerspecialist.uwm.edu](http://www.sce-peerspecialist.uwm.edu)

Or call: Alice F. Pauser  
608-242-8484 ext. 224



**Peer Specialists**  
Igniting Recovery

## Green County Outreach News...

By **Matt Keller**

Ongoing outreach activities in Green County continue to be successful, and the number of consumers contacting ATI from there has increased considerably in the past several months. Visiting communities like Monroe, Brodhead, and New Glarus and talking with consumers and service providers has revealed an array of barriers related to disability.

ATI continues to distribute outreach materials (pamphlets, booklets, letters) to libraries,

service providers, and associations throughout the county.

In two communities, accessible downtown parking and sidewalks are a public concern. Citizens in Monroe were concerned about having disabled parking spaces shuffled or removed, and an article was recently published in the Monroe Times. In Brodhead, the relocation of a disabled parking space a few years ago has left several disabled citizens irked.

On an individual consumer level, the significant barriers

presented to ATI have been related to housing, legal/financial issues, and daily living.

In the coming months, more outreach activities are scheduled to happen throughout Green County and interested consumers are encouraged to contact ATI for more information. [mattk@accesstoind.org](mailto:mattk@accesstoind.org) or call: 608-242-8484  
Toll free: 800-362-9877



## Dodge County Outreach News...

By **Jason Glozier**

In order to better serve our service area, Access to Independence staff will be at the High Expectations Teen Center in Beaver Dam on the third Tuesday of each month. This is an opportunity for people with disabilities to learn more about Access the services we provide.

On the third Tuesday of each month people with disability related needs in Dodge County can contact us between the hours of 1:00 pm and 4:30 pm to receive Information and Referral Services, Independent Living Skills Services, Advocacy Services and access to a Peer Support Network.

We also provide Assistive

Technology demonstrations and loans, deaf and hard of hearing services and youth recreation services.



### IL LEGISLATIVE DAYS...

**On February 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>** Access to Independence will be participating in Independent Living Legislative Days. This two day event is an opportunity for IL Centers and the consumers they serve around the state to educate our legislators about the unique benefits and services IL centers offer. This event consists of a training on the 9<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 - 4:00 with a reception to follow. The training will cover topics like how to talk to legis-

lators, Managed Care, The ADA, and Mental Health Issues in Wisconsin. The following day will be filled with meetings with all of the state legislators in Access' service area to talk about the benefits of having an Independent Living Center. If you feel that being a part of the ATI community has helped enrich your life in some way and would like more information on who your legislators are, and how to attend the Legislative Days event contact Jason Glozier at ATI: [jasong@accesstoind.org](mailto:jasong@accesstoind.org) or 608-242-8484  
Toll Free: 800-362-9877



# Become a Friend to Access! Your donations Help Fund our Programs!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \$: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your donation to the address below. Donations are tax deductible!

THANK YOU!

**WisLoan and TeleWork... *Funding for your Independence!*** WisLoan and TeleWork are alternative loan programs that assist Wisconsin residents with disabilities to pay for assistive technology or home modifications (WisLoan) or computers and other equipment needed to work from home or remote sites (TeleWork), Loan amounts and terms depend on the item purchased and your ability to repay the loan. Credit reports are reviewed, but the reasons for a poor credit score are considered and lending criteria is more flexible.

Want to learn more? Call for a brochure or call AT and make an appointment to complete an application. 608-242-8484 or Toll free 800-362-9877 TTY 608-242-8485

**ACCESS TO INDEPENDENCE, INC.**

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