



# Access Info



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

## The ADA Turns 20—It's Time to Celebrate!!

*July 26th, 2010 marks the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA is the landmark legislation for people with disabilities that has laid a foundation of equality and rights for all people with disabilities. Thanks to the ADA, many people with disabilities have access to their state and local government's programs and services, access to businesses of all types, access to public and private transportation, access to education and employment, access to telecommunication and media, and access to basic rights such as voting. We could go on, but you realize the magnitude that the ADA has had on our everyday lives. That said, we also realize that the ADA is only the foundation, and that we have a long way to go to realize the dream of a fully inclusive society for all, regardless of disability. It is for these reasons that Access to Independence is excited to announce a day-long series of events marking the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.*

**July 25, 2010 - Madison, WI**  
for further info visit [www.accesstoind.org](http://www.accesstoind.org)

### **ACCESS MARCH:**

**Begins at 11:30am at the Library Mall of the UW-Madison Campus**

Walk, roll or ride with fellow "marchers" as we make our way up State Street to the State Capitol. Bring a sign, or grab a ready-made one to show how proud you are of where we've come and how much work is yet to be done!

### **RALLY FOR EQUALITY:**

**Begins at 1:30pm outside of the State Capitol**

Get re-energized and empowered as speakers from the disability community, past and present politicians, and others fire up the crowd with speeches about what the ADA means to all of us, and how we must continue to reaffirm our commitment to the ADA!

### **AWARDS CELEBRATION:**

**Begins at 3:00pm at the Overture Center for the Arts**

The final event of the day-long celebration will be a chance to spend time with others and enjoy light hors d'oeuvres, music and an awards presentation. Be sure to make a nomination!



## **Beyond Dane—A look at our other three counties** **Columbia County News...**

**By Tracy Miller**

Columbia County has successfully “rolled out” Family Care, thanks to the great work of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) staff. This was a big effort, but more work needs to be done to let people know about their options within the programs available to them. For example, many people with disabilities and their families still don’t know much about Self Directed Services (SDS) option within the Family Care benefit. Others are unfamiliar with a separate option called IRIS (I Respect, I Self-Direct), where you take charge of all your supports and services. Speaking of self-direction, an interested group of young people with disabilities, their

parents, and teachers learned more about the topic at a presentation on March 1 in Portage, sponsored by the Columbia County TAC (Transition Advisory Committee.) These program options give people with disabilities a lot of choice and control over their services, and over their daily lives. At the presentation, Dennis Harkins, a trainer with the Pathways Program, gave an overview of how SDS and IRIS are designed to work. Then, the mother of a teenager with a disability, and the teenager herself, shared how IRIS has worked for them to design a support system that works for the family. The mom was honest that since IRIS is a newer program, it has taken some advocacy, as well as some trial

and error to get the right supports in place for her daughter who has both physical and cognitive disabilities, but she praised the flexibility and freedom the program provides. She emphasized that even in IRIS, you are not completely on your own, as a consultant helps you locate resources and connect to services, and a Fiscal Agency takes care of paying the bills. If you would like to learn more about Self-Directed Services and the IRIS program, there will be many more opportunities over the coming months.

If you live in Columbia County and have questions about ATI and its services, give me a call at: 1-800-362-9877, ext 227.

## **Dodge County News...**

Access To Independence (ATI) has a new dedicated staff member for Dodge County, in an effort to increase ATI’s presence and availability. Nick Isham, with the help of the ADRC in Columbia County, has established office hours at the Administration Building in Juneau. The Administration Building is located at 127 E Oak St. Nick will be holding office hours every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in room 1D from 10

am to 12 pm.

In addition to office hours, Nick is available on those and a few other days each month to meet with consumers in the location of their choice, including their homes.

To make an appointment please call Nick at least one day ahead of time at the Access To Independence office at 1-800-362-9877, ext. 222.

As a new staff person at ATI, Nick has been getting to know people and agencies in Dodge County; such as the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and members of Dodge County’s Transition Advisory Council (TAC)

Nick looks forward to providing the multitude of services that ATI has to offer. Nick will be working hard to get to know the people and communities of Dodge County real soon!

## Green County News...

Access to Independence will now have regular office hours once a month at the Green County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), located in Monroe. The second Wednesday of each month from 1 – 3 pm Matt will hold his office hours at the ADRC. Matt will also be available to meet with consumers, their families, and others in the communities of Green County on those and other days he is in Green County each month. To schedule an appointment in with Matt in Green County, please contact him at the ATI office in Madi-

son at least one day in advance.

### **Upcoming office hours at the Green County ADRC:**

Wednesday, July 14,  
Wednesday, August 11,  
Wednesday, September 8

### **Upcoming Events in Green County**

**7/27** Assistive Technology Fair, Monroe High School  
10:00 – 3:00pm

If you would like to meet with Matt please contact him at 800-362-9877 ext. 230 or email him at: [mattk@accesstoind.org](mailto:mattk@accesstoind.org)

### **Green County LTC Forum**

On June 15th, Access to Independence joined with the Southwest Wisconsin ADRC, Green County office; the Southwest Family Care Alliance; and the IRIS program to provide an opportunity for citizens in Green County to learn about the LTC options available to people with physical Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities, and older adults. The presentation provided an overview of the options, how to enroll, as well as advocacy supports and services.

## In Dane County News...

Family Care is a term that is well-known throughout much of Wisconsin as a majority of Wisconsin's counties have made the change from particular waiver programs to a managed care model of long-term care services. Until this year, Dane County has explored the idea of bringing Family Care here, but has stopped at some initial planning and exploration of options. That may be changing as the State of Wisconsin has informed Dane County that the waiver programs for people with physical disabilities, developmental

disabilities and older adults will not be renewed after the year 2013. In addition, the state has also asked the county to start making some preliminary decisions about Family Care by the first of July. This move by the state has prompted a flurry of activity by consumers, advocates, and Dane County to look at what the state's message means to the county and what will happen over the next few years. Please call ATI or check our new website for news and information about any possible activity or planned changes.

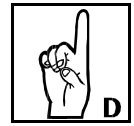


**Thursday, July 8**

**5:30 – 7:00p.m.**

Join us once again 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 at 608-242-8484 by July 5**, if you plan to attend, so we know how much food to provide. If you need a Sign Language Interpreter or any other accommodations to participate in this event, please let us know as soon as possible.

# Deaf and Hard of Hearing News...



ATI has been busy working hard to expand all of our services to the rest of our 4-county region. If you or someone you know would like information about Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services available through Access to Independence, please contact our office at VP 866-948-8760, TTY 608-242-8480 or Direct VP 608-234-4484

## *Sleeping a little safer now... A success story by Denise Pulfer*

Becky is a deaf single mother who owns her own home. When Madison changed its smoke alarm code, Becky

realized that her house wasn't up to date and wouldn't pass a fire safety inspection. If she was a person who could hear, she could have gone to her local store to buy updated alarms. Being a person who is deaf, she was required to buy specialized alarms costing \$200 each and needed to have them professionally installed. To learn more and get assistance Becky contacted Access to Independence.

Staff educated Becky on the different alarms available so she could make an informed decision for her home. Then,

Access to Independence connected Becky with the Madison Fire Department where she learned of a grant program offering donated visual alarms for people who are deaf. Becky was able to take advantage of this grant and had the Fire Department place them in the best locations in her home. They also educated her on making an escape route and fire prevention.

The new alarms are now installed in her home. Becky can now sleep better knowing that her she and her family are safe.

## WisLoan and TeleWork Loan Programs

### ***Funding Independence!***

WisLoan and TeleWork are alternative loan programs that assist Wisconsin residents with disabilities to pay for assistive technology, or to purchase the necessary equipment and technology to enable people to work from home. These loan programs are different than traditional bank loans because a bank doesn't make the final decision. The WisLoan and Telework Board does. That allows flexibility for people who may have an item they need to maintain their independence, but have trouble coming up the money all at once, or finding other ways to pay for what they need. Simply call Access to Independence for information.

### **WisLoan**

What Can I Buy with a WisLoan? You can purchase technology such as wheelchairs, computers, ramps, vehicle modifications, or kitchen or bathroom remodeling projects or construction.

### **TeleWork**

What Can I Buy with a TeleWork Loan? You can purchase items such as computers and software, scanners or fax machines, tools, office furniture, or modifications for an accessible office.

### **General Questions:**

How much can I borrow? Loan amounts range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. The loan would be for the exact amount of the item.

Can I apply if I have no job? YES, Social Security Disability or Retirement benefits and other sources of income are considered.

Can I apply if my credit is poor? YES, the reason for the poor credit is considered, as is one's ability to repay the loan.

How do I apply? Contact ATI to complete the loan application materials in person. Application can be done at the ATI office or at a location of your preference.

## ActionNet is HERE!

In this edition of "Access Info", we'd like to introduce the new Southern WI Action Network for Disability Rights, which is more commonly referred to as **ActionNet**. ActionNet is a grassroots advocacy network that is made up of a collection of groups in the Access to Independence service region that will allow anyone to stay connected to important disability issues that are local, statewide, or national. This network will be a way for people in Columbia, Dane, Dodge, and Green Counties to share information, advocate, and get active in issues that impact people with disabilities. To coordinate this network ATI has hired a Grassroots Organizer who will coordinate the network, and work with individuals interested in learning about, and understanding issues as well as developing the skills to become leaders in their communities.

In the last newsletter you were introduced to Jason Glozier,

who has since been hired as the new Grassroots Organizer.

ActionNet is made up of two major parts: The first part is the network itself. It offers members an easy way to receive important information through a variety of ways including phone calls, email, and social networking sites like Facebook. Members will also have the ability to respond when there are issues that need action. The network is also a way for people to share what is going on in their local communities by identifying common problems and making it easier to come together for change. The second part of ActionNet is the development of the local groups. These local groups offer people in the community the ability to come together and work on issues at any level.

Members of local groups will have the chance to get together with other people in their county to discuss the information they have received through the network, and

learn about the ways they can address issues in their community together.

ActionNet offers ways to get involved at a level you feel comfortable. This means that there is a place for everyone. Members of the network can do as little as receive information, or as much as taking on a leadership role in a local group. There are a number of ways for members to work within the groups such as making phone calls, researching issues and working to communicate with the other groups in the network, or meeting with business owners and politicians about issues facing people with disabilities. Over the coming months Access to Independence would like your help in building both the network and local groups. If you are interested in more information about ActionNet, or would like a group presentation about what it can bring to your area please call Jason Glozier at (608) 242-8484 ext 236 or email him at [jasong@accesstoind.org](mailto:jasong@accesstoind.org).

## Assistive Technology Demonstrations...

By Kirsten Engel



Access to Independence staff is available to do presentations to community groups and individuals to conduct assessments, demonstrate equipment and assist people to identify the assistive technology that best meets their needs. We now have 3 kits that we can use to demonstrate phone related equipment. These kits include amplified phones, voice carry over phones, picture phones, pocket talkers, and signaling devices. Please call us today to schedule a free demonstration!

Another part of this project is to provide co-pay grants to individuals. If a person who has received a TEPP voucher has a physical disability and is low income they may qualify for a \$100 co-pay grant.

If you are interested in learning more about this project please call Kirsten at (608) 242-8484 x228.

\*Program funded by the Universal Service Program of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

## ATI Board of Directors Update...

There are many positive activities occurring at ATI and the ATI Board of Directors is very excited about the direction we are headed. We have excellent management staff directing the day to day activities of ATI, we have our fiscal house in order (but always looking for new sources of revenue), dedicated staff and board members, and a revised vision and mission.

During the past year the board and staff have met a couple of times and agreed upon new vision and mission statements, along with new values or guiding principles to use when making future decisions regarding ATI. These meetings were facilitated by Lynn Breedlove from DRW. Lynn also greatly assisted the board and the executive director in developing a 3 year strategic plan. ATI staff are

now deciding on specific activities and timelines to meet goals and objectives agreed to by the board. We will have measurable outcomes to evaluate how well we are doing in meeting our goals and will assist us in making decisions to continue to move us forward and provide quality programs and services.

To assist the board in making good decisions, we need new board members – so I am inviting individuals who want to get more involved in ATI. To join our board! We are specifically looking for individuals from Green, Dodge and Columbia counties, individuals with disabilities and people of various cultural and ethnic minorities. If interested please call me at 608-444-7986 or contact the ATI office in

Madison.

We have a number of things to be thankful for at ATI and we want to thank all those people and agencies that have been supportive to us over the years. We look forward to continuing our cooperative ventures

Thank you.

Chris Hendrickson, President

ATI Board of Directors




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## New Staff Updates...

**Jason Beloungy** is the new Program Director for Access to Independence. Jason will oversee the programs and services that ATI offers, and will work to ensure that ATI is meeting the needs of people with disabilities throughout our 4-county region. Before coming to ATI, Jason was a Policy Analyst for the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), in Washington, D.C. NCIL is a national membership organization that advances independent living and the rights of people with disabilities, at the federal level, through consumer-driven advocacy. Jason worked in

such areas as healthcare and long-term care reform, the Americans with Disabilities Act and other civil rights and judicial issues, employment and social security reform, voting rights, and funding for Centers for Independent Living (CIL) and Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC). Prior to his time with NCIL in Washington, D.C., Jason spent several years working for Independent Living Resources (ILR), the independent living center that serves the western and southwestern portion of Wisconsin. Jason worked as an Independent Living Specialist in

the ILR Satellite office in Richland Center. Jason has also spent parts of his career working in a community residential setting, a community mental health program, a treatment facility for youth and adolescents in the criminal justice system, and lobbying and legislative research with a state chapter of a national association. Jason received his Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire.

Jason currently lives south of Madison with his wife, Heather, and his two daughters, Ella and Ilana.

## New Staff Updates...continued

**Nicholas Isham** is the new Independent Living Coordinator who will be covering Dodge County. The past five years Nick had worked in Madison as a Direct Support Employee for people with Developmental Disabilities and is looking forward to using his skills as the new IL Coordinator. Nick is from Middleton, Wisconsin with a BA in psychology from Upper Iowa University-Madison Center. Nick has had a hearing impairment since birth that ranges from moderate to severe and uses hearing aids in both ears. In the past, Nick has studied culinary arts at the Madison Area Technical College and worked in a restaurant for four years. Nick now enjoys cooking for friends and family as a

hobby along with playing music with his friends.

**Peter Lohr** comes to Access to Independence as an intern with a wealth of experience. Currently, he serves as president of the Disability Advocacy Awareness Coalition at the University of Wisconsin Whitewater. At ATI he will be learning, carrying out, and contributing to the core services offered at the agency. Also, he will be instrumental in helping plan, coordinate and carrying out events such as the celebration of the ADA and helping bolster the grassroots advocacy program.

**Belinda Richardson** moved from Florida to Madison in 2007, to attend school at the University of

Wisconsin-Madison, where she recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education. She has been involved with working and volunteering with different organizations such as Wisconsin Quality Home Care Commission and UW-Madison Adaptive Fitness program. She has also been an intern with Access to Independence (ATI) for a year and is now currently employed as a part time outreach coordinator for ATI.

Her skills and talent are being utilized to promote the organization in other counties. She is always happy to serve those that need help.

## ATI Staff...

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

**Jason Beloungy**.....ext 229  
Program 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  
Grassroots Organizer

**Nick Isham**.....ext. 222  
Independent Living  
Coordinator-Dodge County

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

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

**Peter Lohr**.....ext. 234  
ILC Intern

**Tracy Miller**.....ext. 227  
Independent Living  
Coordinator-Columbia County

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

**Denise Pulfer**  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Outreach Coordinator  
VP 866-948-8760

TTY 608-242-8480  
Direct VP 608-234-4484

**Belinda Richardson**...  
ext. 225  
Outreach Coordinator



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**THANK YOU!**

**Access Info** is published three times a year, Winter, Spring/Summer 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 or its Funders.

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If you are interested in advertising please contact ATI at the information on page seven (7). Thank you!.



**ACCESS TO INDEPENDENCE, INC.**

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