

THE Colorado Independent

Fall 2009

This newsletter is published by the Provider Relations Unit of the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and edited by Judy Neal, Independent Living Program Coordinator. The goal is to share information among the ten Colorado Centers for Independent Living, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and DVR staff. The submission of information or articles from all affiliated with these organizations is both encouraged and welcomed. Please e-mail any articles of interest to judy.neal@state.co.us If you have questions, please phone me at (303) 866-4645.

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Because I work: A qualitative study on what people with disabilities get from work besides a paycheck.

By Patricia Yeager

Patricia Yeager, working as a researcher for the Rocky Mountain Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (Rocky Mountain ADA Center) has written a consumer – targeted booklet about her research on people with disabilities and work. This is a summary of the research.

The 2006 American Community Survey indicated that only 35% of people with disabilities work as opposed to 74% of the general population (Smith, F.A., & Clark, D.M. 2007). As an advocate in the Independent Living movement, I noticed people with disabilities who overturned various barriers to go to work and wondered what motivated them to do so.

We conducted a phenomenological qualitative study using semi-structured interviews with 21 employed persons with disabilities in California, Colorado, Montana and Utah. Key questions were: “What do you get out of work besides a paycheck?” “What strategies did you use to go to or get back to work?”

Participants indicated that because they work 1) they could support themselves and a family, 2) were socially connected to their communities, 3) experienced satisfaction in their lives, 4) their mental and physical health improved, 5) they role modeled for others, 6) they were empowered and 7) they eloquently described self-actualization: a) what others said about them, b) what they learned about themselves and c) how they changed because of work. Strategies for motivation to work included family role models and expectations, seeing other people with disabilities working, disability agencies' assistance, social networks and volunteering.

This research has been translated into a consumer friendly document for print and web distribution (www.adainformation.org/ResearchPublications.aspx). The author calls for sharing information about both monetary and personal benefits of work with people with disabilities. The concept of "employment supports" is introduced whereby an individual with a disability can receive benefits from both government sources and employment. Family and society need to have expectations of work for people with disabilities, make work options available to youth with disabilities and showcase a wide

variety of people with disabilities working through mediums such as YouTube. Expectations and role models impact thinking about work.

CPWD Seeks Executive Director

The Board of Directors is conducting its search for a new executive director and is looking for the right person to lead a Center for Independent Living that has stable funding and established programs which have been serving the community for 31 years. We are looking for someone who understands and practices the philosophy of independent living for persons with disabilities as an empowerment model; someone who is a visionary leader with strong and flexible management skills as well as a clear communication style with good marketing skills.

For more information go to:

www.cpwd.org



From the Director

**By
Nancy Smith**

Everyone has been worried and scared about the economic woes of the country and the state. Closer to home, I am sure all of you worry about how to keep enough funding flowing into your centers to be able to provide quality services to your customers. We all do this ruminating and yet have very little control over most of what happens.

The General Assembly will soon start its committee meetings and the preparations for the 2010 session. At the end of August, the Governor is expected to release his plan for resolving an expected state deficit for the SFY 2010-11 budget that is hovering at about \$384 million. One of the Interim Session groups formed by the General Assembly this summer is called the Economic Opportunity and Poverty Reduction Task Force. Money or the lack thereof is on everyone's mind.

So, given the fluctuations and ruminations occurring all around us, over what things do we have control? I think we have the power

of data and a compelling message about how the money is used. More frequently than ever before I hear the executive management of CDHS, the General Assembly, and Congress saying, "Prove what you are telling us. Make the case." In order to make the case we have to plan to collect and analyze data. Some people say that is a waste of time and resources. In this day and age, I think that is a foolhardy opinion to hold.

What do these powerful groups want to know? What is needed versus what you currently have? How many people are being served? How much does it cost to serve each person? What is the result of service provision? What would happen if resources were not available to serve people? How many people are not getting served? How much in resources would it take to serve them? How much does serving the people you serve save the state? What do people who have been served add to the state?

Data collection, analysis and presentation have become a basic cost of doing business. Anecdotes

and success stories are no longer enough. The folks with the money and other resources want hard cold numbers. Giving it to them increases our chances of keeping what we have and possibly getting more when things improve in the state and nation. Having this information readily available will require more planning, staff training, and use of precious

resources. I'd say: consider it a good investment in your future.

Finally, I was looking back at past articles and realized I have been writing a column for this publication for more than two years. That's hard to believe! Congratulations go to Judy Neal for taking the time to produce this great instrument of communication.



DIVISION of
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

State of Colorado



Colorado•SILC

From the SILC

By Linda LaPointe

Hello, I am pleased to chair the SILC for this coming year. And we have our work cut out for us. Every three years a new State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) is written. This plan must be sent to and approved by the Rehabilitation Services Administration in Washington DC. It will outline and dictate the work the SILC does for the next three years.

This is the year to write the new plan. It is due next summer and will take the full 10 months until then to put it together. Although we have a very talented SPIL committee, it may well require the most effort of all the plans to date. The reason I say that is that it is taking most of our resources; both in time and funds.

A needs assessment is going to be designed by qualified professionals with whom the SILC is contracting. This has been a dream of some SILC members for a few years now and the SILC

finally has the funds to act on it. The assessment itself will be performed by the professionals along with SILC members and staff, over a period of months. Data will be acquired from those with disabilities in forums to be held all over the state. After it is analyzed, we will have a report that is statistically driven and we will know what needs Coloradoans with disabilities have that are not met. From there our next three year plan will be written identifying areas that the SILC can address on a statewide basis.

So as you can see, our work is cut out for us! If you'd like to help us in this endeavor, please contact us at our website:
<http://www.coloradosilc.org/>

Colorado•SILC

www.coloradosilc.org

Assistive Technology of Colorado Program Celebrates 20 years!

On August 19, 1988 President Reagan signed the bill and the Technology Related Assistance Act of 1988, commonly known as the “Tech Act” was enacted. In 1989, Colorado was one of the first nine states funded to develop a statewide Assistive Technology (AT) Program. In 1998, Congress reauthorized the law and it became the Assistive Technology Act. The intent of the law was to address three areas of concern: the need for knowledge and training on assistive technology, to identify funding sources for technology, and the need for a comprehensive system to help people with disabilities acquire appropriate technology

Twenty years have passed and in that time the field of assistive technology has developed significantly with thousands of devices and equipment from which to choose. Thus, the challenges continue for raising awareness about current technology, training, maintaining and improving a systemic approach for helping people acquire technology. However, as we mark this twentieth anniversary for Colorado’s program, let us celebrate some of the accomplishments over the last two decades:

- Assistive Technology Partners, under the University of Colorado Denver, School of Medicine, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation provides training and technical assistance to organizations and agencies on assistive technology throughout Colorado.
- State organizations and agencies collaborate on the Colorado Assistive Technology Coalition to maximize resources for delivering information, technology, and providing evaluations to those needing to identify appropriate AT.
- Through partnerships with the Department of Education and the Office of Workforce

Development, a satellite Western Technical Assistance Center, WestAC, is in place in Grand Junction and serves the western part of Colorado. In the fall of 2008, SETAC, the Southeast Technical Assistance Center opened in Colorado Springs to serve the southeast region of the State.

- Assistive Technology Funding Sources, an online funding database is available for all Coloradans to identify funding options in their local communities.
- AT Match, an online AT exchange program, is available to all Coloradan to identify no cost/low cost assistive technology. AT Finder is available to do a single online search for a device on multiple electronic classified ads simultaneously, including eBay and Craig's list.
- Through funding from the Colorado Department of Education, an assistive technology loan bank exists to allow all public schools in Colorado to borrow devices and equipment for evaluations, demonstrations, and short term try-outs to assure that students with disabilities have access to the most appropriate technology for learning.
- Through funding from the Office of Workforce Development, Assistive Technology Partners has provided technical assistance to improve accessibility of services at Workforce Centers throughout Colorado.
- An AT Network has been established as a collaborative with Independent Living Centers, Area Agencies on Aging, the Senior Community Service Employment Program, and Assistive Technology Partners to provide trained Assistive Technology Information/Referral Specialists in regions throughout Colorado.
- For three years, the Governor has annually proclaimed an Assistive Technology Awareness Week in October.
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Colorado Assistive Technology Awareness Week **October 11- 17**

Colorado's annual Assistive Technology (AT) Awareness week is October 11-17 this year. Organizations are gearing up to remind people about the tools and resources that are available to improve the quality of an individual's life. AT comes in many shapes and forms and can be as simple as hearing aids, a talking alarm clock, knee braces or manual and power wheelchairs, or as sophisticated as voice-activated computer systems and stair climbing wheelchairs. AT tools can assist in dressing or cooking as well as help people stay in communication with friends and family through adaptations to access electronic devices such as computers or the telephone. AT can help people on the job, at home, and in the community. Assistive technology tools and services are necessities, not merely luxury items. These essential tools empower people to control their lives and their future.

2009 is a significant year, because it marks the 20th year for the Assistive Technology Program of Colorado. The Colorado Assistive Technology Coalition encourages all organizations and agencies that serve those with disabilities or the aging population to celebrate this occasion by doing something to raise awareness about available technology. Ideas for this include displaying AT or AT posters in lobbies or common areas. Or, create links from your website to websites on Assistive Technology resources. Add information about assistive technology on agendas for fall meetings. Attend the Assistive Technology Partners Open Houses in Grand Junction at the WesTAC office, Colorado Springs at the SETAC office, or the Denver center on October 14 from 3 to 5:30 p.m. Highlight a success story about someone in your organization or someone you serve who uses assistive technology.

For more information on AT Week events in your area or to explore ways that you can promote AT Awareness, contact: Assistive Technology Partners at 1-800-255-3477 or 303 315-1280 or ATP@ucdenver.edu .

EASTER SEALS PROJECT ACTION MOBILITY INSTITUTE

By Beth Danielson, Executive Director
Connections for Independent Living



The Mobility Council for Weld County was one of 15 groups nationwide selected to participate in the Project Action 2009 Mobility Institute in Washington, D.C. The institute was held in July; Brad Taylor and Beth Danielson from Connections for Independent Living served on the 5-member team along with representatives from the City of Greeley Transportation Department, the Northern Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization, and North Range Behavioral Health's Frontier House.

Team Greeley arrived with a deep commitment to improving accessible public transportation in our community. The team learned from accessible transportation experts and federal officials, addressed specific topics in breakout sessions, and drafted and presented its plans to the full institute.

Team Greeley's one year action plan focus is to create partnerships to foster travel independence for transit customers through increased community awareness, education and travel training, emphasizing community transit need and customer demand. Outcomes are to increase community awareness; travel training; and to demonstrate community need with a focus on transit sustainability. The team will meet monthly to discuss goals, tasks and progress and will report to the Weld County Mobility Council on a regular basis.

Mobility Institute Follow-Up

The Weld Advocacy Network on Disability (WAND) held a candidates forum in Lincoln park in Greeley on August 27. All candidates for City Council and Mayor were in attendance. The candidates were notified with their invitation that the lone topic would be transportation. Candidates were each allowed a few minutes to state their position, then they were asked questions by those in attendance. Following the Q & A, all enjoyed an ice cream social.





Service Animals

By Cindy Powell

A service animal is any animal **individually trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability**. In addition to guide dogs used by some individuals who are blind, service animals assist people with **other** disabilities:

- Alerting persons with limited hearing to sounds,
- Protecting persons who have seizure activity, and
- Picking up or carrying objects for persons with mobility limitations.

Though some states have programs to certify service animals, **licensing, certification and identification papers, collars and harnesses are not required**. If a business is uncertain that an animal is a service animal, the proprietor may ask which tasks the animal has been individually trained to perform.

A service animal is not a pet. Regardless of a business' "no pets" policy, a service animal must be allowed to accompany an individual with a disability wherever customers are permitted to go.

A deposit cannot be imposed on an individual with a service animal, even when pet deposits are required. However, a business may charge a customer with a disability for the cost of repairing or cleaning property damaged by a service animal **if their policy requires that customers without disabilities pay for damage caused by pets**.

Transportation providers may not charge higher fares or refuse to provide services to individuals with service animals. Allergies and fear of animals

are not valid reasons for denying access or refusing service to people with service animals.

Only when a service animal's behavior poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, or when a service animal's presence would result in a fundamental alteration to the nature of the business can a service animal be denied access. In those rare circumstances, an individual with a disability must be presented with the option of enjoying the businesses' goods and services without their service animal present.

Therapy and emotional-support animals are NOT service animals under the ADA. For more information about service animals, please contact the U.S. Department of Justice's toll-free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 (voice) or 800-514-0383 (TDD).

Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) - Rocky Mountain ADA Center is one of ten regional "one-stop" comprehensive Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) resource centers. Located in Colorado Springs, DBTAC - Rocky Mountain ADA Center serves a six state region: Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

DBTAC - Rocky Mountain ADA Center provides

- *technical assistance,*
- *education and training,*
- *public awareness,*
- *materials dissemination, and*
- *information and referral*

to employers, businesses, state and local government agencies, disability and rehabilitation programs, people with disabilities, architects, code officials, schools and many other entities with rights and responsibilities under the ADA.

For informal ADA guidance, information or materials, please contact DBTAC Rocky Mountain ADA Center at (800) 949-4232 between 8 am to 5 pm weekdays. 3630 Sinton Road, #103, Colorado Springs, CO 80907;

www.adainformation.org

Upcoming Training

FREE Learning Lab

**Dragon Naturally Speaking v.
10: Quick Tips for Success**

**Presented by
Denice Roberts, MEd
Via Distance Ed from
Grand Junction**

Location:

**Grand Junction:
Wednesday, October 21st,
2009 from 2:30-4:30 pm at
the WestTAC office**

**Colorado Springs:
Tuesday, November 3rd,
2009 from 2:30-4:30 pm at
the SETAC office**

For more information, contact:
Assistive Technology partners
303-315-1280

CTAT 4th Quarter 2009

For more information and to
register for a training visit
www.ctat-training.com

Getting in Gear- October 5-
November 6 \$100`
*Registration Deadline - September
28*

http://www.ctat-training.com/cgi-script/csCalendar/csCalendar_HYBRID.cgi?command=view&id=223&Division=disability

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-10-04/get-work-now-getting-in-gear-distance-learning-course><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-07-22/a-matter-of-ethics>

High Performance Job
Development- October 6 \$125
*Registration Deadline - September
21*

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-10-06/high-performance-job-development><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-08-12/introduction-to-supported-employment>

Grant Writing - October 20-21 \$250
Registration Deadline - October 5

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-10-20/grant-writing><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-08-25/applied-behavior-analysis>http://www.ctat-training.com/cgi-script/csCalendar/csCalendar_HYBRID.cgi?command=view&id=195&Division=disability

ADA - October 27 \$125

Registration Deadline - October 12

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-10-27/ada-a-working-partnership><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-09-22/get-work-now-paving-your-way>

Exploring the Route - November 2-December 10 \$100

Registration Deadline - October 26

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-11-01/get-work-now-exploring-the-route-distance-learning-program><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-09-24/more-money>

http://www.ctat-training.com/cgi-script/csCalendar/csCalendar_HYBRID.cgi?command=view&id=189&Division=disability

Coaching for Peak Performance - November 10-11 \$170

Registration Deadline - October 26

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-11-10/coaching-for-peak-performance>

In the Money - November 17 \$95

Registration Deadline - November 2

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-11-17/in-the-money><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-09-24/more-money>

<http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-09-29/become-a-customer-service-superstar>

If you have any questions please contact Wendy Sain at 303-636-5727.

Teletraining - \$35 per phone line
For more information and to register for a training visit www.ctat-training.com or click on the link below the training.

Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations - October 14

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-10-14/strategic-planning-for-nonprofit-organizations><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-07-16/super-spectacular-sales>http://www.ctat-training.com/cgi-script/csCalendar/csCalendar_HYBRID.cgi?command=view&id=210&Division=disability

Supercharged Employment Staff - November 19

<http://ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-11-19/supercharged-employment-staff-teletraining><http://www.ctat-training.com/training-events/2009-08-18/successful-employment-for-people-with-tbi>

Surviving the Holidays - December 15

Coming to website soon!

If you have any questions please contact Wendy Sain at 303-636-5727.