



# CommunicAbility

A Quarterly Newsletter For Our Community Members with Disabilities

**Winter 2017**  
Vol. 17, Ed. 1

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- Medicaid Block Grants: What You Need to Know

## NHU Features

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- Raffle and Silent Auction
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***“In all things it is better to hope than to despair.”***

*- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

## No Internet?

If you do not have access to the Internet at home, and are unable to access the websites listed in this newsletter, we would be happy to mail you a printed copy of the information that is available online.

To request a printed copy, please contact us via phone 414-299-0124.

Thank you!

***“Let us not look back in anger, or forward in fear, but around in awareness.” – James Thurber***

## Moving forward, one day at a time...

2016 was one heck of a year, wasn't it?! We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the very real emotional toll that this past year has taken on so many. Certainly, we felt it here as disability advocates. As, I'm sure you felt it too.

No matter where you stand, left, right or center, you surely witnessed (or perhaps engaged in) the discourse at some point. It was simply impossible to avoid. And I would bet that you felt pretty crummy having witnessed, or engaged in it. I know I did and at times I still do.

Generally in the New Year, we write an article about personal accountability and making sure you live the best version of your life possible. This year though, that idea felt a bit out of place, because, the truth is, it isn't about me or you. It's about us. All of us. I know that sounds cliché, but it's true.

We simply cannot hope to thrive alone with our thoughts. We cannot wallow alone in our fears or anger. We must live each day with intent and purpose. We must look for opportunities to connect with our peers and support each other as best we can. We must come together and try to work side by side to solve the problems that our community, and indeed our country, has faced for far too long.

So then, what are WE to do? There is no single way to answer that of course, but here are a few things you can try today.

### 1. Turn off the TV and read. Every day.

Reading will help build a context for what is happening and will arm you with the information you need to advocate for a bright future for all Americans.

Read opinion pieces (particularly from people who disagree with you). Read historical accounts. Read biographies of prominent advocates and civil servants. Read news from around the world. Just read.

### 2. Engage in meaningful conversation.

The best way to learn about what is happening in the world is to talk to others who have different opinions and experiences from our own.

There is too much misunderstanding, coupled with an unwillingness to understand among people with differing opinions these days. Misunderstandings are almost always caused by a lack of open communication. It's time to encourage open and constructive dialog on hard issues. The key word here is constructive. Don't start a conversation to win. Start a conversation to understand.

New Horizons Un-Limited is a Milwaukee-based, non-profit organization that provides individuals with lifelong disabilities increased access to the information, tools and life experiences that will enable them to improve their lives.



[new-horizons.org](http://new-horizons.org)



[facebook.com/NewHorizonsUnLimited](https://facebook.com/NewHorizonsUnLimited)



[twitter.com/newhorizonsmke](https://twitter.com/newhorizonsmke)

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*“Wisdom is the reward for a lifetime of listening ... when you'd have preferred to talk.”*

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### 3. Share your story.

Sometimes it's hard to talk openly about what's closest to your heart. There is vulnerability there. We understand. But, for as long as we have been in existence as an organization, we have believed that the only way to solve these long standing issues that impact our community is to share and connect. You never really know how your story might touch someone or perhaps save someone.

Be brave. Be bold. Be open.

### 4. Connect on social media.

There are groups and chats for EVERYTHING on Facebook and Twitter. These virtual spaces bring people together to vent, discuss and encourage. Some groups are better than others. It's easy to leave one behind if you find it is not to your liking. If you need help finding one, call us (414-299-0124) and we can help you.

### 5. Volunteer for or connect with an advocacy organization.

Again, organizations exist for every cause under the sun. If something is important to you, get involved. The organization does not have to be local for you to make an impact. Sign up for their newsletters to stay on top of action items. Connect with a group on Facebook or Twitter.

### 6. Contact your Legislators

Whether you agree or disagree with their policy positions, it is essential that your local and federal legislators hear from you. They need to hear your stories. They need to be reminded that you exist. Always be civil. Always be courteous. Always be firm.

If you need help locating your officials, call us (414-299-0124). We can help you.

## Medicaid Block Grants; what they are and what they could mean for you

Chances are, you or someone you love relies on Medicaid for any number of services; routine health care, personal aides, or health therapies, just to name a few.

Perhaps you've heard rumblings recently about some proposed changes to Medicaid; specifically, the idea of changing the way in which Medicaid services are funded by the Federal government. In an effort to decrease the federal financial burden, lawmakers have proposed block granting the federal portion of Medicaid to the states. A block grant is essentially a lump sum payment to states allowing state governments to direct services as they see fit.

This would not only decrease federal spending, it would also essentially take federal mandates out of the program. States would decide who to serve, how many to serve and with what types of services. Proponents love the flexibility afforded to states. Opponents, including many disability advocates, fear that millions could face service cutbacks or lose coverage all together.

We of course do not have all the answers. That's why it's important that you contact your local and federal policy makers and ask them some important questions:

- Could block grants create Medicaid funding shortages for states?
- Could I lose access to services that help me/my loved one live independently?
- Will I/my loved one lose access to therapies that help manage the effects of disability?
- Will there be waiting lists for essential health and community care services?
- Can you guarantee that our most vulnerable citizens will not see a reduction in essential services?

In addition to these questions, share your story and tell your elected officials what role Medicaid plays in your life. Would you be able to lead the same quality of life without the services you currently receive?

Contact your federal policy makers via the **US Capitol Switchboard, 202-224-3121** and request their office.

To connect with all other elected officials, visit **[usa.gov/elected-officials](https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials)**

## Refurbished Laptops Available to Eligible Individuals with Disabilities



If you have a physical disability and limited income, you may qualify to receive a refurbished, Windows laptop via our Computer Literacy and Access Program. Laptops are available to individuals who wish to improve their lives via opportunities for lifelong learning.

Preference will be given to those applicants who are enrolled in college and/or GED classes and to those who are actively engaged in workforce development.

Please contact us via e-mail, [horizons@new-horizons.org](mailto:horizons@new-horizons.org), or phone, 414-299-0124 to request an application.

# Raffle & Silent Auction

Support our mission for an opportunity to win a variety of fabulous prizes, including gift cards, brewery tours, mini get-aways and more! Our prizes are still coming in, so we will update our list as we develop our prize packages.

## Tickets

\$2 each • 3 for \$5 • 7 for \$10

**20 for \$20**

*Drawing:*

**March 30, 2017 at 3pm**

*Need Not Be Present to Win!*

## Questions?

Call: 414.299.0124

E-mail: [horizons@new-horizons.org](mailto:horizons@new-horizons.org)

Visit: [new-horizons.org/raffle.html](http://new-horizons.org/raffle.html)

*Event proceeds support services that promote the lifelong learning and growth of our community members with disabilities.*

**COME BY TO BID ON OUR SILENT AUCTION ITEMS**

**Wednesday & Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, 9am - 3pm**

**US Bank Center Galleria • 777 E Wisconsin Avenue • Milwaukee, WI**

**Southwest**

*Vera Bradley*

**INTERCONTINENTAL**  
MILWAUKEE

...and so much more from Summerfest, Saz's, Sybaris, Road America, Old World Wisconsin...

**Return Service Requested**

## Move Forward in Hope

As we embark on this new journey in 2017, it's important to remember to remain connected and find support and encouragement from our community. It's up to each of us to reach out so that we can begin to understand each other and help each other move forward with hope and confidence.

BE CONSTRUCTIVE	HOPE
BE OPEN	LEARN
COMMUNICATE	LISTEN
CONNECT	OPEN YOUR MIND
DISCUSS	READ
EXCHANGE	SHARE
FIND YOUR VOICE	SUPPORT
GET INVOLVED	UNDERSTAND

B E C O N S T R U C T I V E U R I  
S I F C O I E E E T I D A E R D I  
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V T G A S B M F A N V N U A M U O  
A E L C P W E C R N I N S M R O V  
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E-mail Us  
[horizons@new-horizons.org](mailto:horizons@new-horizons.org)



Since 1994, New Horizons Un-Limited has supported our community members with disabilities on their personal journeys. We provide the information, tools, training, and personalized guidance they need to find purpose and fulfillment in their lives.

Nearly all of our services are offered completely FREE of charge to ensure that every individual may benefit. Your contribution will provide FREE consultations, FREE job skills development, FREE home computers, FREE computer training, FREE computer support services, and more. Please consider giving so that others may receive the gift of growth and progress. THANK YOU!!

**Via mail:** New Horizons Un-Limited, 811 E Wisconsin Avenue, Ste. 937, Milwaukee, WI 53202

**Online:** [new-horizons.org/donate.html](http://new-horizons.org/donate.html)