



CommunicAbility

A Quarterly Newsletter For Our Community Members with Disabilities

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Articles and Features

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“Contemplation often makes life miserable. We should act more, think less, and stop watching ourselves live.”

~ Chamfort

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.

To learn more about what we do for our community members with disabilities, please visit us online: www.new-horizons.org

No Internet?

If you do not have access to the Internet, and are unable to access the websites listed, we would be happy to mail you the information that is available online. To request a printed copy, please contact us at 414-299-0124.

“Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and government officials, but the voters of this country.”

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

Voting: Your Right, Your Responsibility

Looking back to 1996, the first election for which I was eligible to vote, I am ashamed to admit, I did not exercise my voice. I stayed home with a plethora of excuses: I don't care who wins, it won't affect me anyhow, I don't know how or where to vote. Oh the shame!! How could I have allowed this opportunity to pass me by!

As the years passed, I became more educated, more interested and more passionate about specific issues. I began to understand just how meaningful the act of voting can be. It's about standing up for what you believe in and choosing a leader that will carry your shared vision forward.

Now of course, my guy or gal didn't always win, but at least I could stand up and say I tried. And that's exactly what voting is all about! It's about participating, showing up as a voice in society and taking responsibility for your choices and actions.

Please, do not stay home on November 6th, or worse yet, go to the polls uninformed. Educate yourself on the issues and vote with confidence. I can personally attest to the pure satisfaction of this effortless but significant act!

Worst Excuses Not to Vote...

1. I don't have any way to get to the polls

As an individual with a disability you may be able to obtain and submit an absentee ballot via mail. Most requests for a ballot must be obtained in advance of Election Day. To learn more, contact your state's election office.

2. My vote doesn't matter anyway

A recent study suggested that if citizens with disabilities turned out to the polls at the same rate as those without disabilities, there would have been 3 million more votes in 2008! Proof that your vote and the vote of your peers does matter! Plus, with so much talk about Medicare and Medicaid reform, your vote is more important than ever. Please be informed and choose the candidate that will best address your unique needs.

3. I don't know who to vote for

There are plenty of ways to get to know the candidates. Watch the debates, read the newspaper, or visit the candidates' websites. You may also wish to check out the National Forum on Disability Issues on Facebook.

Save a Tree: Receive CommunicAbility via E-mail

Help us cut down on paper waste! E-mail us at horizons@new-horizons.org to request an electronic version of CommunicAbility via e-mail. Please be sure to include your complete name in your e-mail.

What You Need to Do to Vote in the 2012 Election

1. Register to Vote

Every State has its own registration guidelines. Some states allow you to register the day of, others requires you to do so ahead of time. Check with your state election office or visit votesmart.org to learn of your state's specific guidelines.

2. Educate Yourself on the Candidates

The only thing worse than not voting, is voting without fully grasping the policy positions of the candidates. Check out our previous article, "Worst Excuses Not to Vote," or the Election Resources box to the right, for ideas on how to learn more about the candidates.

3. Find out How and Where to Vote

Every polling place is required to have measures in place to assist voters with disabilities. However, if your disability prevents you from going to the polls, request your absentee ballot ASAP. Contact your State Elections Office to do so.

Election Resources

NHU 2012 Election – new-horizons.org/elec12.html

Find out important election event dates, link to candidate websites and other essential election resources.

Project Vote Smart - votesmart.org

Learn how to vote and which candidates match your viewpoints.

ISideWith.com - isidewith.com

Take a brief quiz to learn which candidate you side with.

PolitiFact - politiifact.com

Find out which political statements hold water and which are "pants on fire" falsities.

A Closer Look at Franklin Delano Roosevelt



Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) - you certainly recognize the name. But do you know his story? It is one of perseverance and fortitude, and certainly one worth knowing and appreciating.

Mr. Roosevelt was a bright and ambitious young man, earning a History degree from Harvard in just three years, and then passing the bar exam after another three years in law school. In 1910, at just 28 years old, he was elected to the New York State Senate.

Just 11 years later, Mr. Roosevelt would find himself paralyzed from the waist down, after contracting what was suspected to be polio. He fought hard to regain the use of his legs, but it wasn't meant to be. He would rely on a wheelchair for mobility from then on.

Despite this setback Mr. Roosevelt would return to politics and become the only president to serve more than two terms. During his 12 years in office, he carried our nation through the Great Depression and World War II, created the Social Security program, instituted programs for the unemployed, and championed the rights of the less fortunate.

He also started what is now known as the March of Dimes, an organization dedicated to healthy births and children.

And he accomplished all of this while seated in a conspicuously concealed wheelchair, or propped up with awkward crutches and the shoulder of an aide.

Though he took extraordinary measures to conceal his disability, he remained empathetic to the common man and fought for our rights throughout his presidency. Much of what he created laid the groundwork for the many modern programs designed to empower you towards self sufficiency.

It is rather hard to imagine what modern life would be like for those with disabilities had FDR allowed his own disability to define him as incapable.

It is up to us to live in his image, and carry on as he did, without limits or fear. Let us not take for granted all he has provided. Let us repay him by utilizing the resources we have to better ourselves so that someday we may do the same for others.

FDR Wisdom

"There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still."

~

"[We] are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of [our] own minds."

~

"When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on."

Preparation and Perseverance is Key for Employment Success

"First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do."

~ Epictetus

It's that simple really! Create a goal. Make a plan. Follow that plan (with adjustments along the way of course). Reach your goal. Bask in the glow of success!

If you want to work, you need to work to get there. Sitting around and simply thinking about a goal doesn't bring you any closer to reaching it. It is action, dedication, and perseverance that will help you achieve your goals.

I'm sure you have hit many a roadblock along the way and perhaps they have caused you to retreat back to the "safety" of your status quo. You need to remember however that on every journey you will be met with unexpected and disheartening setbacks; nothing worth having comes easily after all. You need only condition yourself to move past these hurdles and refocus on your goal. And while preparation will not remove obstacles from your path, it will certainly help you move beyond them.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce

Started in 1945 as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week," NDEAM has expanded to a month long, nationwide federal and private sector effort to promote the talents of citizens with disabilities.

We believe strongly in a diverse, competent workforce. We also believe that people with disabilities should take an active role in ensuring that they are part of this workforce. Luckily, more than ever before, there are resources available to ensure you gain the skills and confidence needed to succeed on the job.

Check out the US Department of Labor: Office of Disability Employment Policy to learn about their initiatives - dol.gov/odep

Preparing for Employment

1. Set an employment goal

Try to choose a career path that meets your interests and aptitudes. For example, some are more drawn to structure and logic, while others are more artistic or creative.

Try the following tools to help you identify potential career paths:

Jung Typology Test -
humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes1.htm

Determine your personality type and for which careers you are best suited.

O-Net Online - onetonline.org

Identify career paths based on your interests and type of work you enjoy.

2. Find a Service Provider

As a person with a disability you are entitled to receive a range of employment services via the Social Security Administration. Call 1-866-968-7842 (Voice) or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY/TDD) to learn more.

3. Gain Experience and Skills

If you want to find a job in today's job market you need to bring marketable knowledge and skills to the table. The only way to do so is through education and experience.

Improve Your Computer Skills

Attend classes at your local library, community center or online. Here's a great online training resource:

GCF Learn Free - gcflearnfree.org

Volunteer to Gain Experience

If you want to develop resume experience, volunteer. There are literally thousands of volunteer opportunities available throughout the United States. Contact your local charity or look online for opportunities in your area. Here's a great online Volunteer Directory:

Volunteer Match - volunteermatch.org

4. Be Confident and Persistent

Believe you can and you will.

What can YOU do? The Campaign for Disability Employment

whatcanyoudocampaign.org

Visit this website for loads of inspiration and resources and ideas on how you can join the campaign to inform employers of your capabilities.

We also encourage you to check out recent submissions for their video contest. See what other people with disabilities are doing in the world of work and get inspired to move forward in your career!

Return Service Requested

Your Voice, Your Vote Word Search

Tuesday November 6, 2012 – Mark it on your calendar! That is the day when your future will be decided! Don't let anyone else decide it for you. It's your future, your voice, your vote!

"To make democracy work, we must be a nation of participants, not simply observers." ~ Louis L'Amour

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| ACTION | RESPONSIBILITY |
| BALLOT | RIGHTS |
| CHOICE | PARTICIPATE |
| DEMOCRACY | POWER |
| ELECTION | PROGRESS |
| FREEDOM | VOTE |
| FUTURE | YOUR VOICE |

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