



CommunicAbility

A Quarterly Newsletter For Our Community Members with Disabilities

Spring 2011, Vol. 11, Ed. 2

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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 cannot visit the websites listed in this newsletter, please contact us directly at 414-299-0124.

We would be happy to mail you the information available online.

US Chamber of Commerce: Workers with disabilities are an untapped resource

In the April 19th article, *Workers with Disabilities: An Untapped Resource*, published on the US Chamber's online magazine *Free Enterprise*, the Chamber's President, Tom Donohue, implores businesses to see past the stereotypes and misperceptions of hiring workers with disabilities, and instead see the vast potential of this untapped pool of talent.

According to Donohue "too many employers are not aware of the pool of qualified workers with disabilities, do not know how to reach them, and are concerned about the perceived costs and challenges of providing accommodations."

Donohue goes on to acknowledge however, that employers who have hired workers with disabilities view them as "dependable, dedicated, hardworking, and productive."

These sentiments echo the findings of the 2010 Kessler Foundation/NOD Survey of Employment of Americans with Disabilities. According to the survey, which interviewed 411 human resource managers and senior executives, nearly 40 percent reported difficulty finding qualified candidates with disabilities, and 67 percent cited a lack of such candidates as a barrier to hiring.

The report also indicates that the vast majority of employers (97% and 91% respectively) believe that their employees with disabilities have the same or more dedication and the same or less turnover as their employees without disabilities.

As the 77 million baby boomers begin to retire in the coming years, companies will face unprecedented worker shortages.

Donohue believes that "companies that take a lead in hiring people with disabilities are positioning themselves for success when worker and skills shortages will make diversity and inclusion programs a necessity rather than a choice."

It is our hope that this crossroads will lead to greater diversity in our workplaces and that people with disabilities will finally find their place in corporate America.

There are many resources available to businesses that wish to incorporate inclusive diversity initiatives:

- **NHU: Employer Resources**
new-horizons.org/empyer.html
- **US Business Leadership Network**
usbln.org

Individuals with disabilities who are looking for employment also have a variety of resources at their disposal:

- **NHU: Employment Resources**
new-horizons.org/rscemp.html

To view the 2010 Kessler Foundation/NOD Survey of Employment of Americans with Disabilities visit:

- 2010disabilitysurveys.org

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On a Need to Know Basis: The Federal Budget and people with disabilities

While most Americans do not wish to concern themselves with the National budget, this year of all years, people with disabilities should take notice.

Massive overhauls to the Medicare and Medicaid programs have been proposed by House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin.

Ryan believes that by turning Medicaid into a series of block grants to the states, local governments would spend the money more efficiently and would benefit from increased flexibility. Democrats contend however that reduced federal funding will only force states to cut services and diminish quality, leading to even longer waiting lists for essential services.

The Ryan proposal would also repeal and defund the Affordable Care Act, which has been praised by many disability-rights advocates for including numerous disability-friendly provisions.

DAWN, an advocacy organization in Wisconsin, has created a comparison of both the House Budget and the Budget proposed by the President.

Medicaid

Obama: Preserve program, but reduce funding by \$100 billion over the next 10 years by finding efficiencies.

Ryan: Reduce funding by \$1.4 trillion over the next 10 years and turn into a block grant program, providing a lump sum of federal money to states.

Medicare

Obama: Preserve program but reduce growth in funding by using Medicare's purchasing power to reduce drug and other costs.

Ryan: Turn into a voucher system that would provide an as-yet-undetermined amount to buy private health insurance.

Domestic Discretionary Spending

(Includes education, supported employment, supportive housing, Head Start, transportation, community health centers, and much more)

Obama: Reduce funding by \$600 billion over the next 10 years

Ryan: Reduce funding by \$1.6 trillion over the next 10 years, eliminating almost all programs.

Taxes

Obama: Eliminate some tax breaks, increase taxes on wealthy individuals, and limit itemized deductions for millionaires and billionaires.

Ryan: Provide \$4.2 trillion in tax cuts to corporations and upper-income individuals over the next 10 years, but eliminate some tax breaks.

The House and Senate now must consider both budgets and agree on a version that will effectively lower our National Debt. It is clear however, that each party has very different views as to how to accomplish this goal.

For more on the Budget:
new-horizons.org/wnlgn.html

Contact your Elected Officials:
usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml

President's speech addresses needs of Americans with disabilities

The following are excerpts from President Barack Obama's April 13th speech on Fiscal Policy.

...part of this American belief...expresses itself in a conviction that each one of us deserves some basic measure of security and dignity. We recognize that no matter how responsibly we live our lives, hard times or bad luck, a crippling illness or a layoff may strike any one of us...And so we contribute to programs like Medicare and Social Security, which guarantee us health care and a measure of basic income after a lifetime of hard work; unemployment insurance, which protects us against unexpected job loss; and Medicaid, which provides care for millions of seniors in nursing homes, poor children, those with disabilities. We're a better country because of these commitments. I'll go further. We would not be a great country without those commitments.

...let me be absolutely clear: I will preserve these health care programs as a promise we make to each other in this society...I will not tell families with children who have disabilities that they have to fend for themselves. We will reform these programs, but we will not abandon the fundamental commitment this country has kept for generations.

... both parties should work together now to strengthen Social Security for future generations. But we have to do it without putting at risk current retirees, or the most vulnerable, or people with disabilities...And it can be done.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your commitment to America's citizens with disabilities!

Our 2011 Raffle and Silent Auction Contributors

We would like to extend a special thank you to all of the companies that generously contributed to the success of this year's Raffle and Silent Auction. Especially Southwest Airlines, for their very generous contribution of 2 Roundtrip Travel vouchers. This donation undoubtedly helped propel this year's event to our best yet!

Thank you for supporting your community members with disabilities!



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CommunicAbility: Disability News You Can Use

Volume 11 • Edition 2

Wisconsin voter ID bill likely to pass before this reaches your mail box

Already passed by the Wisconsin State Assembly, the Wisconsin voter ID bill (AB7) is expected to easily pass through the state Senate, and be signed into law by Governor Walker.

Under the legislation, starting in 2012, voters will have to present a valid driver's license, state-issued ID, passport, naturalization papers or tribal ID to obtain a ballot.

What does this mean for you?

If you do not have a valid driver's license or other form of acceptable ID you will need to obtain a state-issued ID from your local DMV and bring it to your polling place in 2012.

Voting Absentee?

If you plan to submit an absentee ballot, you will have to provide a copy of an acceptable photo ID with your ballot, unless you have already provided a copy in a previous election or are "indefinitely confined," in which case you must submit a statement signed by the person who witnesses your absentee ballot verifying your identity.

While touted as a measure to end voter fraud, disability advocates fear that this bill will cause undue hardship for many Wisconsin citizens with disabilities and in turn discourage them from voting.

Ironically, however, the passage of this bill only serves as a reminder that voting is a necessary and powerful way to make your voice heard. We must elect officials that understand and address the issues faced by their constituents with disabilities.

We must not allow this bill to erase our relevance! We must come together and make our voice heard at the polls!

To read the voter ID bill in its entirety, visit the Wisconsin State Assembly home page and type 7 in the Proposal Number box.

legis.wisconsin.gov/asmhome.htm

Support NHU! Download the GoodSearch Toolbar Today!

Visit goodsearch.com/toolbar/new-horizons-un-limited to get started...

The image shows a screenshot of the GoodSearch toolbar. Above the toolbar, there are six callouts with arrows pointing to specific features: 'Easy access to GoodSearch.com' points to the GoodSearch logo; 'Search the web' points to the search input field; 'Indicates the school or nonprofit you support' points to the 'Click to choose charity' button; 'Easy access to GoodShop.com' points to the 'GoodShop' button; 'Coupons & deals' points to the 'Coupon' dropdown menu; and '% that will go to charity' points to the 'Donation' button.

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...and then, simply click on the Download Toolbar button!



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