
CommunicAbility



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY

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You see things and say "Why?"
I dream things that never were and say "Why not?"

~ George Bernard Shaw ~

Spring 2003

Volume 3, Edition 2

New Horizons Un-Limited Inc. (NHU) is a non-profit organization based in Milwaukee with a mission to provide people with life-long disabilities, their families and caregivers increased access to information, communication and opportunity. To learn more about our mission and activities, please visit the New Horizons Un-Limited website at: <http://www.new-horizons.org>.

2003 Raffle for Opportunity and Silent Auction A Great Success

Thank you to all of the individuals, businesses and organizations that kindly donated items for use in our raffle and silent auction. A special thank you to all of our volunteers - without you this event would not have been possible. Our first raffle and silent auction was a great success, raising over \$3000 for our community initiatives. There are no words to express our appreciation!

National News

An advocates victory! HHS approves Medicaid waiver in Alabama

In recent months, Nick Dupree, a now 21-year old Alabama man with a disability requiring 24-hour home nursing care, made national headlines with his battle to change Alabama Medicaid policy. He was fighting to change a policy that would end his eligibility for home care services once he turned 21. Without this care, his family would be faced with an unfortunate choice: either move Nick to a nursing home hundreds of miles away, or take full financial responsibility for the 24-hour home care he requires. While he began the battle as one, he found support from thousands along the way. On Monday, February 10, 2003 his endless dedication to this effort paid off. On this day the US Department of Health and Human Services responded to the outcry from Nick and thousands of advocates by approving a Medicaid Waiver that would provide home care services to people with disabilities beyond the age of 21.

Even with this victory in hand however, Nick contends that he will continue to fight for the thousands of others throughout the United States that are in danger of losing their home care services. Please join in this advocacy effort or an effort close to your heart. Without your voice, very little will be done to affect positive change in your life. Remember, it takes but one to set the wheel of change in motion.

Interagency group encourages input from disability community

Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) has unveiled a new website designed to learn more about the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities concerning potential research areas. ICDR, a group promoting coordination and cooperation among Federal agencies conducting rehabilitation research programs, has developed the site to help ensure that federal research efforts address the needs of the disability community.

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NHU assumes no responsibility in guaranteeing the services, programs or conditions as described.

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Of course the only way to ensure that **your needs** are addressed is for you to **share your concerns**. The new website provides an easy to use form for submitting recommendations on research concerning access to technology, education, employment, community life, health care, and other needs. The comments shared by you and other members of the disability community will be used by ICDR in developing recommendations to the President and Congress on priorities related to disability and rehabilitation research. This research will in turn undoubtedly lead to better programs and greater opportunities for you.

Here is your chance, make your voice heard. Visit the ICDR website today at <http://www.icdr.us/> and share your concerns.

Telework – a practical solution for employees and employers alike

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has recently released a fact sheet for employers who are considering allowing an individual with a disability to telework (work from home) as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Telework offers a practical solution for all parties involved, providing the employer with a more efficient employee and the employee with a disability with the perfect working environment. The EEOC Telework Fact Sheet provides a guided approach for employers and employees to explore telework and to determine if it would be a workable solution for both parties.

If you are an employee with a disability interested in exploring the option of working from home or if you are an employer interested in offering this option as a reasonable accommodation, the Telework Fact Sheet is a must read. This fact sheet can be viewed online at <http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/telework.html>.

If you would like to learn more about reasonable accommodation in the workplace, including the option of telework, call the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a free service that offers employers and individuals ideas about effective accommodations. JAN can be reached at (800) 526-7234 (Voice / TDD).

Telework Resources and Opportunities

New Horizons Un-Limited

We have written several guides to assist employees and employers develop an effective telecommuting (telework) program. These guides include many helpful planning and assessment tools. The guides are available on-line or by contacting us at (414) 299-0124. To view the guides online visit:

“Telecommuting, an Option to Traditional Employment for the Disabled”

- <http://www.new-horizons.org/eemtl1.html>

“Telecommuting, Establishing the Process”

- <http://www.new-horizons.org/eemtl2.html>

National Telecommuting Institute (NTI)

NTI works in partnership with employers who have agreed to “go virtual” and prepares qualified individuals with disabilities for work primarily as customer service representatives.

For more information, visit them on the web at <http://www.nticentral.org/> or call their East Coast Office at (617) 787-4426 ext. 320 or their West Coast Office at (415) 389-1703.

Need help paying for your local telephone service?

Are you living on a limited monthly income? If so, you may be eligible to receive discounts on your local telephone service through two federal assistance programs - Lifeline and Link-Up. The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has developed a Universal Service Fund from which the two programs originate.

The Lifeline program provides discounts on monthly service for qualified telephone subscribers. These discounts can range from \$6.75 to \$9.50 per month, depending upon your state of residence. Link-Up on the other hand helps qualified low-income consumers in initiating telephone service. This program offsets one-half of the initial connection fee, up to \$30.00. The program also includes a deferred payment schedule for these charges. Qualifications for participating in these two programs vary by state. For more information and to determine whether you qualify for discounts, call your local telephone company or your state regulatory agency. (Continued on p. 3)

(Continued from p. 2) Contact information for your state regulatory agency can be found on the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners website at www.naruc.org/resources/state.shtml.

Wisconsin News

Does your home need repairs?

Spring is the perfect time to address those important home repairs that you may have been avoiding. If you need assistance in paying for the repairs, the Milwaukee County Home Repair Loan Program may be able to assist you. Milwaukee County offers low interest and zero interest loans to owner occupied, low income households for home repairs. Nearly all home repairs qualify. There are no application fees, pre-payment penalties or any hidden costs. Additionally, qualifying elderly and low-income households may also be eligible for a deferred loan, which does not require loan payment until the home is sold. The maximum qualifying income based upon household size follows: 1-\$37,650, 2-\$43,000, 3-\$48,400, 4-\$53,750, 5-\$58,050, 6-\$62,350. If you are interested in applying for this program, call (414) 278-4917.

Spring into a great time with Milwaukee Recreation

Milwaukee Recreation offers a number of exciting recreation programs for people with disabilities living in the Greater Milwaukee area. Spring activities are scheduled to begin in late April and last through the first week of June 2003. Activities include aerobics, arts and crafts, scrapbooking, cooking, dancing, self-defense, swimming, and much more. There are also very practical and informative classes being offered, such as Life Skills for Independence, Self-Defense and the Computer Learning Club. Minimal fees apply. While the deadline for spring programming is April 11, 2003, there are additional activities planned for the summer as well.

If you missed the spring deadline, give Milwaukee Recreation a call to hear about their summer programs. For more information, call (414) 647-6065, visit their website at <http://www.milwaukeeerecreation.net/> or e-mail therapeutic@milwaukeeerecreation.net.

Gear up for Milwaukee's Festival Season!

Following is a listing of Milwaukee's downtown and lakefront festivals planned for this summer. Each festival is sure to offer a little something for everyone.

Pridefest June 6-8, Henry Maier Festival Park. This festival is the biggest Pride Celebration in the nation! Three days of entertainment, dancing, food, and fun. For more information, call (414) 645-3378.

Asian Moon Festival June 13-15, Henry Maier Festival Park. This is the first ethnic festival of the season. Enjoy music, dancing, drumming, exotic foods and spices, shopping and learning about the Asian culture. Persons with disabilities are admitted FREE on Friday, June 13. To learn more, e-mail info@asianmoon.org.

Polish Fest June 20-22, Henry Maier Festival Park. Celebrate the Polish Culture; enjoy entertainment and delicious food while strolling through the new Cultural Village. For more information, call (414) 529-2140.

Summer Fest June 26-July 6, Henry Maier Festival Park. This is "the festival" of the season. Eleven days of great entertainment and food. Visit their website for the details - <http://www.summerfest.com/>.

Bastille Days – July 10-13, Cathedral Square Park. This four-day festival is free, open to the public and dedicated to preserving French heritage and culture. For more information, call (414) 271-1416.

Festa Italiana – July 17-20, Henry Maier Festival Park. This festival offers a taste of Italian culture, cuisine and entertainment. Thursday, July 17th is VIP Day, a day in which the grounds are open exclusively to people with disabilities, their family members and caregivers between the hours of 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. To receive your FREE ticket, call (414) 223-2193.

German Fest – July 25-27, Henry Maier Festival Park. Celebrate the German culture at the United States' largest German festival. People with physical disabilities can enter FREE on Friday, July 25th, from noon until 3 p.m. For more information, call (414) 464-9444.

Irish Fest – August 14-17, Henry Maier Festival Park. Come, get a true taste of Ireland at Milwaukee's "family-friendly festival." FREE Admission on Friday between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. For more information, call (414) 476-3378.

Mexican Fiesta – August 22-24, Henry Maier Festival Park. It's time to fiesta! FREE admission is offered on Friday and Saturday from noon until 1:00p.m. to people with disabilities. For more information, call (414) 383-7066.

Indian Summer Festival – September 5-7, Henry Maier Festival Park. Come; experience the diversity of traditional and contemporary American Indian culture. People with disabilities and one adult may enter FREE on Friday the 5th. For more information, call (414) 774-7119.

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"He is able who thinks he is able."

~ Buddha ~

Plan to attend the 2nd Annual Social Services Resource Fair

Milwaukee residents with disabilities and their families are invited to attend the second annual Social Services Resource Fair, sponsored by Milwaukee Employment Services Network and the Association for Persons in Supported Employment.

Attendees will learn about available services such as vocational programs and services, educational resources, recreation opportunities, advocacy organizations, technology resources and much, much more. Keep an eye out for the New Horizons Un-Limited booth, we would love for you to stop and talk with us.

This year's Resource Fair will be held on Tuesday, May 13th from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. at American Serb Hall in the Wisconsin Hall. American Serb Hall is located at 5100 West Oklahoma Avenue in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The Resource Fair is free to enter. Come on out and meet your community service providers and learn about the opportunities available in your community. For more information, contact Beth Lohmann at Ranch Community Services by phone at (262) 251-8670 or by e-mail at blohmann@ranchwi.org.

Review a resource for NHU

Do you know of a resource that has been particularly helpful to you or someone you know? Do you subscribe to a magazine or newsletter that you simply cannot live without?

As a person with a disability or as a family member, you know better than anyone does which are the best resources available to people affected by lifelong disability. In this regard, New Horizons Un-Limited would like your assistance.

We have recently developed a Review a Resource area on our website, located at <http://www.new-horizons.org/sykrrm.html>. This spring we are focusing on learning more about the magazines you love to read. We will use your reviews on our website so that we may help others choose the best magazines.

Of course we always welcome insight from our disability community. If you would like to share more information about a magazine or resource you have found helpful, please contact us today.

You may either submit your review on our Review a Resource Web Page found at <http://www.new-horizons.org/sykrrm.html> or e-mail us at horizons@new-horizons.org.
