



LEAD ON

A Handbook for Starting a Disability Student Organization^{1.0}

A Student's Perspective

Written and Compiled by Melinda Haus-Johnson
Former President of the Michigan State University Council for Students with Disabilities

This handbook was created by Connections for Community Leadership, CONNECT (College Organizations Networking Now Each Creating Ties), and Michigan Disability Rights Coalition with funding from the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council.



Connections for Community Leadership

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 East Lake Lansing Road, Suite 100
East Lansing, MI 48823

Phone: (866) 532-2669 (toll free)

Fax: (517) 333-2677

Email: connect@prosynergy.org

Important Copyright Information

You are free to:

- **Share** – to copy, distribute, and transmit the work.
- **Remix** – to adapt the work.

Under the following conditions:

- You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author or licensor (but not in any way that suggest that they endorse you or your use of the work).
- If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under the same, similar, or compatible license.
- For any reuse or distribution, you must make the license terms of this work clear to others.
- Any of the above conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holder.
- Nothing in this license impairs or restricts the author's moral rights.

Table of Contents

WELCOME	9
RECEIVE THE MONTHLY E-ZINE	10
REGISTER YOUR ORGANIZATION WITH CONNECT	11
INTRODUCTION	13
PURPOSE AND TYPE OF ORGANIZATION	15
PURPOSE	15
EXAMPLE OF A PURPOSE	16
TYPE OF ORGANIZATION	16
EXAMPLES OF TYPES OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS	16
CHOOSING A NAME	19
SAMPLE NAMES	19
CREATING A MISSION STATEMENT	21
WHAT DOES A MISSION STATEMENT DO?	21
WHAT GOES INTO A MISSION STATEMENT?	21
YOUR PURPOSE	21
YOUR BUSINESS	21
YOUR VALUES	21
QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN WRITING A MISSION STATEMENT	22
EXAMPLES OF MISSION STATEMENTS	22
DETERMINING GROUP STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP	23
EXECUTIVE BOARD	23
EXECUTIVE BOARD POSITIONS	23
EXECUTIVE BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES	24
REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS	25
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS	25
SELECTION OF MEMBERS	26
ELECTION PROCESS	26
SAMPLE ELECTION PROCESS FOR ELECTING BOARD MEMBERS	26
VOTING PRIVILEGES	27
APPOINTMENTS	27

WRITING A CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS	29
EXAMPLE #1: SAMPLE CONSTITUTION FORM	32
EXAMPLE #2: SAMPLE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS	36
REGISTERING THE ORGANIZATION	41
HOW TO GET FUNDING	43
STUDENT GOVERNMENT BODIES	43
ASSOCIATED STUDENTS ORGANIZATIONS	43
RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATIONS	44
COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY FUNDS	44
FUNDRAISING	44
EXAMPLES OF FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES	44
CAMPUS COMPACT	45
RECRUITMENT AND PUBLICITY	47
RECRUITMENT AND PUBLICITY TECHNIQUES	47
FINDING A MEETING LOCATION/OFFICE SPACE	49
OFFICE SPACE	49
MEETING LOCATION	49
ACCESSIBILITY	49
SETTING MEETING TIMES	51
CONDUCTING MEETINGS	53
AGENDAS	53
CONTENT	53
DESIGN	54
PROCESS	54
ICEBREAKERS	55
WEBSITES WITH ICEBREAKER ACTIVITIES	55
COALITION BUILDING	57
WHAT IS A COALITION?	57
WHY BUILD A COALITION?	57
BENEFITS OF STARTING A COALITION	58

HOW TO START A COALITION	59
GUIDELINES TO BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL COALITION	65
BARRIERS TO STARTING A COALITION	66
DISABILITY SERVICES OFFICES	67
PLANNING AN EVENT	69
STUDENT ORGANIZATION EVENT DELEGATION LIST	70
TIMELINE FOR EVENT PLANNING	71
EVENT CHECKLIST	73
MAINTAINING MEMBERSHIP	75
STEPS FOR MEMBERSHIP SUCCESS	75
"MEET AND FEED THE NEED"	76
REPRESENTING THE ORGANIZATION	77
INTERACTING WITH COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION	77
KEEPING RECORDS	79
WHAT TO KEEP A RECORD OF?	79
LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION	81
GROUP ADVISOR	83
WHO CAN BE AN ADVISOR?	83
ROLES OF ADVISORS	83
STUDENT ORGANIZATION'S ROLES TO THE ADVISOR	84
FORMAL AGREEMENTS	84
SELECTING AN ADVISOR	85
ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION	87
INTRODUCTION	87
ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION	87
HOW TO BEGIN COMMUNICATION ASSERTIVELY	88
STEPS TO BEING ASSERTIVE	88
HOW TO BE EFFECTIVELY ASSERTIVE	88
SPECIAL TECHNIQUES FOR DIFFICULT SITUATION:	89

A NOTE ABOUT SELECTIVE ASSERTIVENESS	90
IS ASSERTIVENESS ALWAYS THE BEST WAY TO GO?	90
NOT USING ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION MAY RESULT IN	91
SOME FINAL POINTS	91
RESOURCES ON ASSERTIVENESS	92
CONFLICT RESOLUTION	93
<hr/>	
ASKING FOR BEHAVIOR CHANGE	93
BURNOUT	95
<hr/>	
WHAT IS BURNOUT?	95
POWERFUL VS. POWERLESS	95
COPING MECHANISMS	96
CONNECT	97
<hr/>	
CONNECT ACTIVITIES	97
RETREATS	97
E-ZINE	97
INFLUENCING ORGANIZATIONS	97
CREATING CONNECTIONS	97
WHAT CONNECT CAN Do FOR YOU	98
CONTACT INFORMATION	98
COMMUNITY AND CAMPUS RESOURCES	99
<hr/>	
ON CAMPUS RESOURCES	99
DISABILITY SERVICES OFFICES	99
DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT LIFE	99
OTHER GROUPS	99
DISABILITY RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY	99
CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING	99
ARC MICHIGAN	99
REGIONAL INTERAGENCY COORDINATING COMMITTEES	100
DISABILITY RESOURCES	109
<hr/>	
BOOKS	109
LISTSERVS	109
WEB RESOURCES	110
DISABILITY SPECIFIC	110
STATE RESOURCES	111

NATIONAL RESOURCES	111
INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES	111
DISABILITY PUBLICATIONS	111
DISABILITY CULTURE RESOURCES	111
ARTICLES ABOUT DISABILITY CULTURE	111
SONG LYRICS	114
BOOKS ABOUT DISABILITY CULTURE	115
WEBSITES ABOUT DISABILITY CULTURE	116
REFERENCES	117
<hr/>	
FEEDBACK/EVALUATION	119

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Welcome

Dear Student,

Welcome to CONNECT! We are so excited that you are interested in starting a student group on your campus. We hope that this handbook will assist you along your way.

While you are going through your handbook you will see boxes like the one the right that are filled with information on how CONNECT can support you and your new student organization on your journey of establishing a disability group on campus.

Watch for these boxes!!
Information on how
CONNECT can assist
you and your
organization can be
found in them.

Once you start your student organization, I hope that you will register your group with CONNECT by filling out the registration form on page 11. By registering your organization, you will be connected to a network of college students in Michigan that are actively involved in the disability movement. They are students like you that are starting a student organization. To read about all the benefits of being a registered student organization, please read about the CONNECT program on page 97.

I look forward to meeting you and all your members in the near future. If at any point you have any questions on this handbook please contact me at 1-866-532-2669 (toll free) or connect@prosynergy.org.

Take care,

Theresa Squires
College Leadership Coordinator

Receive the Monthly E-Zine

The CONNECT E-Zine is an electronic newsletter that connects subscribers to leadership opportunities, scholarship information, internships, and networking opportunities for college students with disabilities. You can view all past E-Zines online at www.copower.org/leader/college.htm.

Are you interested in receiving the CONNECT E-Zine on a monthly basis? If so, please complete the following form and send it to: CONNECT, Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, 780 West Lake Lansing Road, Suite 200, East Lansing, MI 48823 or fax it to (517) 333-2677. You may also send an email to connect@prosynergy.org with "Subscribe" in the subject line.

NAME: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

To save on costs, we prefer to send our newsletter electronically. However, if you do not have access to email or need a hardcopy, we are more than willing to honor that request.

I PREFER TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER AS:

_____ A HARDCOPY IN THE MAIL

_____ AN ELECTRONIC VERSION THROUGH E-MAIL

_____ PLAIN TEXT E-MAIL

_____ HTML E-MAIL

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER IN THE FOLLOWING FORMAT:

_____ IN LARGE PRINT

_____ ON AUDIO TAPE

_____ IN BRAILLE

_____ PLAIN TEXT ON A DISK

_____ PLAIN TEXT ON A CD



Register Your Organization with CONNECT

Do you want your student organization to be part of the CONNECT network?

If so, please complete the following form and send it to:

CONNECT
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
780 West Lake Lansing Road, Suite 200
East Lansing, MI 48823

or fax it to (517) 333-2677

CONTACT NAME: _____

ORGANIZATION: _____

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Introduction

Many colleges/universities have active student organizations on their campuses. These student organizations often provide a sense of community for students while working to raise awareness about issues, host events, advocate for change, network, and provide support to fellow students. It is amazing the role that being involved in a student organization can influence who you are and who you become. It was when I became involved in student organizations at Michigan State University (MSU), that I realized my passion for creating equality for people with disabilities. As my involvement increased, my leadership skills blossomed. Without that experience, I wouldn't be the leader I am today.

For an assignment in a community psychology class where we had to select a social justice issue and create an intervention. I chose the lack of accessibility on campus for people with disabilities as the issue. I proposed Accessibility Awareness Week (a week full of events to raise awareness about the barriers that society places on people with disabilities) as the intervention. I was excited about the actual implementation of this project on campus. I contacted the disability office who told me to start a student organization which could then put on the event. They connected me with another student activist, Kim Borowicz, who was also attempting to start a student organization focusing on disability. As we worked together to make this dream a reality, we learned that there used to be a student group for people with disabilities, but it had been inactive for years. We had to start all over again. The previous group has left little documentation or information helpful to resurrecting the group.

This handbook includes all of the things I wish I would have known as Kim and I worked to get the MSU Council for Students with Disabilities running again. The struggles to pick a name, write a constitution, figure out the details of event planning, how to run meetings, and the many other details of starting a student organization. Because of the differences among the college/university requirements, not everything in this handbook will apply to your organization. But, it is a start. We at Michigan Disability Rights Coalition and CONNECT, hope that this handbook can play a role in assisting students with disabilities to start a movement, and help you become a leader of the next generation!

In the famous words of Justin Dart...**Lead On! Lead On!**

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Purpose and Type of Organization

Purpose

There is a lot to think about when deciding about the purpose of an organization. One way to begin this process is by thinking about what you want the organization to accomplish and what you want members to take away from the group. You may want to ask the following questions:

You can use the CONNECT network to help you determine the purpose of your organization.

- Who will the members be?
 - Students with disabilities, allies to the disability community, faculty/staff, undergraduate and/or graduate students, community members, etc.
- Will the organization be cross-disability or disability specific?
 - Cross-disability – focuses on all types of disabilities (mobility, visual, hearing, psychiatric, learning, developmental, emotional, cognitive, HIV/AIDS, etc.)
 - Disability-specific – focuses on a specific disability or type of disability (brain injury organization, blind organization, developmental disability organization)
- Will the membership be open to anyone or by invitation only?
- Will the organization create a sense of community among members?
- Will the organization provide support and if so, in what way?
 - Peer support – supporting one another through conversations about living with a disability
 - Mentoring support – having members in pairs providing support to one another
 - Financial support – providing funds to attend events, purchase adaptive equipment, etc.
 - Advocacy support – assisting members with self-advocacy or advocating as a group for change on campus or in the community
- Will the organization put on events and if so, what types of events?
 - Awareness-raising events, performances, social gatherings, trainings/workshops, support groups, activities, field trips, speakers, etc.
- What will the organization's meetings consist of?
 - Social conversation, critical dialogue, planning events, identifying barriers on campus, creating action plans to eliminate barriers, etc.
- Does the college/university have any restrictions on what student organizations can do?
- Are there existing disability student organizations on campus and if so, does the organization want to work with them?

- Is there an existing student organization that this organization should be modeled after?

Example of a Purpose

The purpose of the Council is to empower students to advocate for disability rights. To accomplish this purpose, the organization will identify disability-related issues on campus and work to resolve them. It will also provide educational services through speeches, workshops, meetings, events, etc.

Type of Organization

After answering the previous questions, you should have a good idea of what the purpose of the organization will be. Organizations may serve multiple purposes; however, because many colleges/universities require a type or classification for student organizations, it is important to choose a primary purpose. This will assist in determining the type of organization.

Examples of Types of Student Organizations¹

- *Academic/Pre-Professional* - Organizations interested in a particular academic area selected from the many campus departmental and college areas.
- *Activist* – Organizations that take action to oppose or support an issue.
- *Arts* – Organizations connected to some facet of the arts such as music, dance, and/or performance.
- *Cultural* - Organizations focused on ethnic, cultural, sexual orientation, and diversity issues, in addition to meeting the needs of minority or oppressed populations.
- *Fraternity/Sorority* – Organizations connected to Greek Life.
- *Honorary* – Organizations with the purpose of recognizing and promoting outstanding scholastic achievement by students within particular academic areas or fields of interest.
- *International* - Organizations providing international students with the opportunity to participate in campus activities with other students of their culture and to share their culture with other students.
- *Media* – Organizations meeting the needs of students through various media such as newspapers, magazines, electronic publications, radio and TV.
- *Political* - Organizations formed around organized political parties, or to advance political or social understanding.

¹ NC State University. (2004). *Types of Student Organizations*. Retrieved on December 10, 2006 from <http://www.ncsu.edu/sorc/types.html>.

-
- *Religious* – Organizations providing religious and social outlets for students of particular faiths.
 - *Service* – Organizations participating in projects which benefit both the campus and the community.
 - *Sports and Recreation* - Organizations providing opportunities for recreational, leisure, and sports activities, including board games, fitness, outdoor activities, or any activities students may do in their free time.
 - *Support* – Organizations whose members provide each other moral support, information, and advice on problems relating to some shared characteristic or experience.
 - *Special Interest* - Organizations which form to meet the needs of students' varied interests not otherwise represented.

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Choosing a Name

Once the purpose/type of organization is determined, the process of choosing a name for the organization begins. When deciding on a name for an organization there are several things to think about.

First, does the name reflect the purpose/type of organization? For example, if the organization is disability-specific, you may want to express that in the name (i.e. Brain Injury Group). If the organization type is a support group, you could include that in the name (i.e. Alzheimer's Support Group).

Second, will the name get people's attention? The name of the organization can aid in recruiting members. Think of the name of the organization as a "selling point." Just as if you were selling a product, you would want the name of the product to get the interest of buyers. The same applies to an organization's name. Having a name that is catchy, exciting, or intriguing may capture the interest of potential members.

Third, is the name unique? You may want to choose a distinct name that sets your organization apart from other organizations on campus or in the community. One way of personalizing the organization's name is by using an acronym – a set of letters that stand for the organization's name. For example, UCP stands for United Cerebral Palsy. If you want to be even more creative, you can have the acronym spell a word that relates to the organization, such as ACHE which stands for Association for Chronic Health Empowerment.

Finally, is the name already taken? As you may know, there can be hundreds, if not thousands, of student organizations on a single campus, not to mention the number of student organizations throughout the state and country. Avoiding duplication is nearly impossible; however, it is still important to look into the names of existing groups on your campus and in your community. In doing this type of research, you may find that an organization like the one you are creating already exists which can save you from reinventing the wheel. You may also discover that the name you were thinking of is being used by another organization. This does not mean that you cannot use it, but if this situation arises, thought should be given to two things: 1) is the name copyrighted by an existing organization, and 2) what implications would there be in choosing a name that another organization is using?

Many colleges/universities have policies regarding student organization names. Many prohibit the use of the college/university name in the name of the student organization. *Check with your Student Life Department.*

We have included a list of names of existing organizations to help get you started. While choosing a name for the organization can be time-consuming and tedious, be sure to have fun and be creative!

Sample Names

- Abler's Club
- Brain Injury Group

Students in the
CONNECT network
can help you with
creating a name for
your organization.

- Alliance for Disability Awareness
- Disabled Students Alliance
- Council for Students with Disabilities (CSD)
- Association for Chronic Health Empowerment (ACHE)
- Cerebral Aneurysm/Tumor Survivors (CATS)

Creating a Mission Statement²

A mission statement is a brief summary (2-3 sentences) of the organization. It captures why the organization exists, what it does, and who it serves. A mission statement should be catchy, memorable, and create a positive image – bringing out an emotional, motivational response in those who read it. Mission statements should also be firmly rooted in the environment in which the organization operates.

What Does a Mission Statement Do?

A mission statement serves three purposes:

1. It signals what the organization is all about to its members, employees, funding sources, and community.
2. It captures the essence of the organization's goals and philosophies upon which they are based.
3. It can be used as a measure for the broad success of the organization.

What Goes Into a Mission Statement?

A mission statement is composed of three parts:

Your Purpose

The purpose section of the mission statement clearly states what the organization seeks to accomplish. It answers the question, "Why does the organization exist".

Your Business

The business section of the mission statement outlines the activities or programs the organization uses to accomplish its purpose. These sections often use verbiage such as "to provide." They may also link to the purpose statement using "by" or "through."

Your Values

The values section of the mission statement reflects the beliefs the organization's members hold in common and/or put in practice. This section answers the question,

² This information was taken from PowerPoint slides created by Joan Deller. (2006). Michigan State University.

“What values guide the organization’s members as they perform their various tasks?”

Questions to Ask When Writing a Mission Statement

Before beginning to write a mission statement, ask the following questions:

- Why is the organization in business?
- Who are the organization’s members?
- What image does the organization wish to convey?
- What is the nature of the organization’s services?
- What types of activities does the organization participate in?
- What kind of relationships does the organization have with the college/university?
- How does the organization differ from others who provide similar services or serve the same populations?
- What philosophies or values were apparent in the discussions of the previous questions?

Examples of Mission Statements

Example 1:

The Council for Students with Disabilities is an all-inclusive group that address issues of importance for students with disabilities on Michigan State University’s Campus, mainly program and facility issues. Members of The Council for Students with Disabilities are seeking positive change that will benefit both MSU students with disabilities and the supporting communities. We embrace the power of coalition building with other organizations at Michigan State University as well as Statewide and National groups, aiming to create a network of knowledge, education, friendship, resources, and support.

Example 2:

The Disability Awareness Network educates the general community by increasing awareness and understanding of issues concerning people with disabilities through providing professional training, engaging in continuous research for curriculum development, and offering services, while embracing the principles of social justice and human dignity.

Determining Group Structure and Membership

Now that you have a purpose, a type of organization, a name, and a mission statement, it is time to begin looking at the structure of the organization. Who makes up the organization's leadership? How are decisions made? What are the types of membership? Who is responsible for what?

When developing group membership, the organization needs to decide the levels of membership and the criteria for each level. Will the organization membership be composed of undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or community members? *Check with your Student Life Department regarding membership. Some colleges/universities require that a certain percentage of membership be students and even have criteria regarding graduate versus undergraduate student participation. In addition, some colleges/universities have policies stating only undergraduates can serve as representatives on student government bodies.*

The organization also needs to decide if they want to have a certain percentage of their leadership be people with disabilities or if they want to make requirements about the diversity of their leadership.

Executive Board

Many student organizations develop a leadership body called an executive board. The executive board consists of members who are highly dedicated to the organization and who are given a position title and specific responsibilities essential to the functioning of the organization.

Executive Board Positions

It is up to each organization to decide what positions make up the executive board and the positions may be different depending on the purpose and activities of each organization. For example, if an organization receives their funding through fundraising events, they may have a position called "Fundraising Coordinator" whose sole responsibilities revolve around fundraising. Organizations receiving funding through their student government or college/university most likely would not have this position because it is not relevant to their organization.

The most common executive board positions include:

- President
- Vice President

Note: Some organizations choose to have Co-Chairs instead of a President and Vice President as a way of keeping one person from having too much power. In this case, the two Co-Chairs would share the responsibilities of the President and/or Vice

President, or would have different responsibilities. Regardless, they would be equal in decision-making capacity.

- Secretary
- Events Coordinator
- Public Relations Coordinator
- Treasurer

Executive Board Responsibilities

Again, it is up to each organization to decide which executive board members are responsible for which tasks. Here is an example of how one organization divided up responsibilities among executive board members.

- *President*
 - Facilitates meetings, prepares the agendas, is the organization's primary spokesperson, has secondary signatory power, ensures the organization follows the guidelines set forth by the college/university, and delegates all unfilled responsibilities.
- *Vice President*
 - Coordinates panels of speakers, updates the constitution accordingly, keeps in contact with faculty allies, compiles resources and opportunities that are of group interest, attends meetings of other student organizations and creates coalitions, and fulfills the president's responsibilities when the president is unable to.
- *Secretary*
 - Takes minutes at executive board meetings and general meetings, types minutes, keeps resources organized, keeps resource list updated, makes copies when needed, and prepares materials to be distributed for speeches.
- *Events Coordinator*
 - Serves as National Disability Mentoring Day committee head, serves as Accessibility Awareness Week committee head, serves as the committee head for any other special events the organization may hold, forms the activism committees, and serves as the Resource Fair Coordinator.
- *Public Relations Coordinator*
 - Maintains website, handles and directs all incoming/outgoing emails, creates and updates flyers for events, speeches, resource tables, etc., is the primary media contact, creates press releases for relevant events, and maintains and updates the listserv.
- *Treasurer*
 - Keeps a financial record and is able to present a report when necessary, is the ASMSU programming board representative, presents a yearly operating budget, and has primary signatory power.

Representative Members

Some student organizations are given representation on student government bodies (i.e. Residence Hall Association) and/or advisory councils. Each college/university has different student government bodies and the name and purpose of these organizations vary. *Check with your Student Life Department to see if your organization has representation on student government organizations or advisory councils.* Here are some examples of representative members and their responsibilities at Michigan State University:

- *Academic Assembly Representative*
 - Serves the Council and ASMSU as the voting representative for disability-related concerns on the Academic Assembly, attends regular Academic Assembly meetings, attends Council general executive board meetings, and must fulfill ASMSU requirements for sitting on the Academic Assembly.
- *Student Assembly Representative*
 - Serves the Council and ASMSU as the voting representative for disability-related concerns on the Student Assembly, attends regular Student Assembly meetings, attends Council general executive board meetings, and must fulfill ASMSU requirements for sitting on the Student Assembly.
- *Residence Hall Association Representative*
 - Serves the Council and RHA as the voting representative for disability-related concerns on the RHA General Assembly, attends regular RHA General Assembly meetings, attends Council general executive board meetings, and must fulfill RHA requirements for sitting on the RHA General Assembly
- *Women's Advisory Committee to the Vice President Representative*
 - Serves the Council and Women's Advisory Committee to the Vice President as a voting representative for disability-related concerns at all committee meetings, attends regular Advisory Committee meetings, attends Council general executive board meetings, and must fulfill the specific advisory committee requirements.

General Assembly Members

General assembly members are individuals who participate in your organization. These individuals may participate by any or all of the following: attending events, participating on an e-mail listserv/discussion forum, serving on organizational committees, assisting with event planning, attending meetings, or taking part in any other activity that assists the organization in fulfilling its mission.

Selection of Members

It is up to the organization as to how members are selected and become part of the organization. Typically, organizations use the following methods to determine membership:

- Executive Board Members – Election Process
- Representative Members – Election Process or Appointment by Executive Board
- General Assembly Members – No Formal Process

Election Process

Holding elections provide the general assembly members with a voice for who they see as best fit for the leadership positions of the organization. Elections are also a fair process that allows any individual who is interested the opportunity to run for a leadership position. While the election process may be different for each organization, below is a sample to get you started.

Sample Election Process for Electing Board Members³

1. The following procedures will take place no later than the tenth (10th) week of Spring Semester.
2. A written nomination must be submitted to the Board of Directors, or to the individual designated to run the election process, by the time and date set for the end of the nomination process. The nomination period shall be no fewer than ten (10) weekdays in length, and must conform to all the Affirmative Action procedures of ASMSU.
3. At the next Council meeting following the end of the nomination period, the election shall be held.
4. Elections shall occur with a prescribed order at every regular election. The President shall be elected, followed by the Vice President, followed by the Secretary, followed by the Events Coordinator, followed by the Public Relations Coordinator, followed by the Treasurer.
5. Each candidate present will be given between three and five minutes to address the membership, following which ballots will be distributed to all eligible voters. The candidates who receive a plurality of the vote will assume the position for which they were running.
6. Candidates are required to be at the election in order to be elected, unless a vote to waive requirement of their presence is passed by all Board members.
7. Members who wish to vote in absentia may do so by means of a sealed envelope containing their vote. This envelope must be given to a member of the

³ Council for Students with Disabilities. (2006). *Constitution and By-Laws*. Michigan State University.

Board of Directors, or to the individual designated to run the election process, before the executive board meeting at which the voting is to occur. The envelope may not be opened before all other votes are collected.

8. Votes will also be accepted through the Council e-mail account.
9. Incumbent board members must be re-elected each year.
10. After the election, newly elected board members will receive training by the outgoing board members before the end of Spring Semester.
11. Shall a board member need to leave the group for a minimum of two months to a maximum of one semester, their position will become open. An election will take place to determine who will fill their position during their leave.
12. Shall a board member need to leave the group permanently or to resign from their position, they must give one week written notification and an election will be held to fill their position.

Voting Privileges

The organization needs to decide who is allowed to vote. Usually this is open to all members (general assembly, representative, and executive board); however, some colleges/universities have restrictions on voting privileges. *Check with your Student Life Department regarding voting privileges.*

Appointments

Appointments are a much quicker way of selecting members to fulfill an identified position. The appointment process can vary depending on the organization. Here is an example:

1. Announcing the position availability at meetings; through a newsletter or email listserv; and/or word of mouth.
2. Asking anyone interested in the position to attend a specific Executive Board meeting.
3. At the specific Executive Board meeting, each person interested in the position gives a brief speech and is then asked to leave.
4. At the end of all the speeches, the Executive Board members discuss the candidates and vote on who they would like to see in the position.
5. Whoever receives the most votes is notified within 24 hours and is asked to accept the appointment.
6. If they accept, they are appointed at the next meeting and immediately begin assuming the responsibilities of that position.
7. If they decline, the person with the next highest amount of votes is contacted and offered the position.

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Writing a Constitution and By-Laws

A constitution contains the fundamental principles that outline the purpose, structure, and limits of an organization. Essentially, the constitution provides a foundation upon which an organization operates. Your constitution serves an important purpose for your organization. The process of writing a constitution should help to:

- Clarify your purpose
- Outline your basic structure
- Provide the cornerstone for building an effective group
- Allow members and potential members to have a better understanding of what the organization is all about and how it functions

A constitution should contain statements concerning enduring aspects of the organization. The format of the constitution varies by organization and some colleges/universities have requirements for items that are covered in the constitution. *Check with your Student Life Department about constitution requirements.* Items that may be covered in a constitution include:

- Name of organization
- Purpose of organization
- Exact title to be used in addressing the organization
- Willingness to abide by established college/university policies
- Membership – eligibility, restrictions, levels of membership
- Election Process
- Nondiscrimination policy
- Advisor information
- Finances
- Amendments – how they are proposed and voted upon
- Registration renewal – if a registered organization
- Attendance policy, quorum
- Affiliation – if organization is a local chapter that has a regional and/or national structure

By-laws are secondary principles that govern the internal affairs of an organization. Bylaws are essentially an expansion of the articles or sections of the constitution. They describe in detail the procedures and steps the organization must follow in order to conduct business effectively and efficiently. Student organizations are not required to have by-laws, but may find them helpful to the organization's operations. The constitution covers the fundamental principles but does not provide specific procedures for operating your organization. By-laws should set forth in detail the

procedures your group must follow to conduct business in an orderly manner. They provide further definition to the provisions contained in the constitution and can be changed more easily as the needs of the organization change.

Items that are subject to frequent revision should be included in the by-laws. Items that might be included here include:

- *Membership* – Sections under this article should discuss and detail the various aspects of membership that may be applicable: membership selection process; types of membership; and procedures for disciplining and/or removing members.
- *Officers* – Sections under this article should discuss the officer selection process (election procedure); duties, powers, and responsibilities of each officer; and procedures for removal from office and filling vacant officer positions.
- *Committees* – Sections under this article should discuss and detail standing and special committees (formation, selection, powers, and duties) and the executive committee (membership, powers, and duties), along with the roles and responsibilities of committee chairs.
- *Meetings* – Sections under this article should discuss types of meetings; how and when they are to occur; requirements for notice, attendance, and quorum (number of members needed present to transact business); meeting format; and parliamentary rules of order (usually Robert's Rules of Order).
- *Financial Procedures* – Sections under this article should discuss and detail (if applicable) dues; initiation fees and fines; collection procedures; and other financial procedures (budgets, expenditures, etc.).
- *Amendment Procedures* – Sections under this article should discuss the procedure for amending the by-laws (means of proposals, notice required, voting requirements). It may also include other specific policies and procedures unique to your organization that may be necessary for its operation.

Amendments can be added to the constitution at any time. Examples of amendments include:

Amendment 1: When the President must leave for an extended period of time, the Vice President assumes the role of President and the Vice President position can be filled through the election process.

Amendment 2: When advocating for full access on campus, CSD members must make a statement similar to, “I realize that this may not be an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) issue, but it would be beneficial for people with disabilities.” Accessibility issues should be brought to the CSD executive board and researched using the ADA Accessibility Act Guidelines (ADAAAG) prior to being publicly addressed.

Amendment 3: In public conversation and in written communication, state clearly whether speaking as individuals or on behalf of CSD. If CSD has not formulated a position on a matter, the member has an obligation to make this known before speaking as an individual regarding the matter.

Want more sample constitutions? Groups in the CONNECT network may be willing to share their constitutions with you.

Example #1: Sample Constitution Form⁴

Tips on Developing or Revising a Registered Student Organization Constitution at Florida Tech

This structural outline has been prepared to assist new student organizations seeking registration status to develop their own constitutions. Currently registered student groups who need to revise their constitutions may also use this constitutional format. The following format includes many aspects needed to successfully operate a student organization that are required by University policy. Required constitution information is noted. Make sure the constitution is clear, concise, without errors, and something you are proud to have in your group's official file at Florida Tech.

Constitution of

(Name of Group)
at Florida Tech

ARTICLE I – NAME (Required)

The official name of this organization shall be _____

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE (Required)

The purpose of this organization shall be _____

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP (Required)

1. Those eligible for membership are _____

(Note: Voting members must be currently enrolled Florida Tech students and all students must be in good standing, unless the organization has a higher GPA requirement noted within this constitution).

2. Membership will consist of the following types (i.e., voting, nonvoting, associate, define each)

3. Membership will be revoked by the organization under the following conditions:

⁴ Tips on Developing or Revising a Registered Student Organization Constitution. *Florida Tech*. Received on October 2, 2006 from http://www.fit.edu/activities/pdf/constitution_tips.pdf#search=%22purpose%20of%20organizational%20constitution%22.

(Note: Membership is typically revoked upon failure to pay dues, if any exist; failure to remain in good standing with the University; or failure to abide by the constitution's purpose as stated in this constitution).

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS (Required)

1. Officer positions in this organization include: _____

2. The powers and duties of the officer shall be:

a) _____
(Title of Officer)

b) _____
(Title of Officer)

c) _____
(Title of Officer)

3. Election of officers:

a) To qualify to be an officer, a student must _____

b) Nomination of officers will be _____
(Note: Options include, but are not limited, to, from the floor, by ballot, by the Executive Committee, etc.)

c) The prescribed election/selection process to be used will be _____
(Note: Options include, but are not limited to, voting for each office following nominations, a single ballot listing positions and nominees, etc.)

d) The candidate(s) receiving an affirmative vote will be declared the winner and will take office on _____ (date).

e) The terms of office shall be from _____ (date) until _____ (date).

4. Should vacancies occur before the completion of a term of office, the vacancy will be filled in the following manner: _____

5. Impeachment charges can be brought against any officer for the following reasons:

6. Impeachment proceedings may be enacted upon a vote of _____
(Explanation: For the impeachment procedure to be activated, usually a majority vote of the active membership or quorum must occur).

7. If impeachment proceedings are voted to occur, the following procedure will be followed: _____

(Note: Utilization of the following steps are suggested... (1) The officer in question be notified of the charges in writing, (2) A special meeting is set up to discuss the charges where all parties are allowed to respond, (3) If a decision is made to proceed, a vote should be taken by the membership... usually needing a large percentage of the members voting for removal in order for the officer to be impeached, (4) Decide how the group will select the replacement and when the new person takes office; this should correspond with Article IV, Section 5).

ARTICLE V – ORGANIZATIONAL STURUCTURE (Required)

1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following persons: _____

2. The Executive Committee’s duties shall be to: _____

3. Other committees of the organization and their duties shall be:

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

(Note: You may add a clause stating additional committees may be established as needed).

ARTICLE VI – FACULTY ADVISOR (Required)

1. In order to qualify to be the Faculty Advisor, the individual must be a full time faculty or staff ember at Florida Tech. Other requirements are: _____

2. The Faculty Advisor will be selected by _____

3. The term of office for the Faculty Advisor will be from _____ (date) until _____ (date).

ARTICLE VII – RULES OR ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES

1. Attendance policy for members will be _____

2. Organizational meetings will be held _____

3. In order to conduct business, a quorum will consist of _____
(Quorum: The minimum number of members who must be present for the valid transaction of business, i.e., voting. Example: 50% + 1 of the active members).

4. In the event of conflict concerning proper rules of procedure, _____ will serve as the recognized authority.

(Note: Usually a resource such as Robert's Rules of Order is cited; people are not cited here).

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCE (Required)

1. Dues for membership to this organization shall be _____
(Suggestion: Have the membership determine an annual amount by a vote held during spring semester or the first fall meeting rather than stating a specific amount in the constitution).

2. Other sources of organizational funding, beside University funding will be _____

3. _____ (Name of Organization) will manage its own finances, but in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by Florida Tech.

ARTICLE IX – AFFILIATION (Required only if your group is a local chapter that has a regional and/or national structure. Please attach a copy of your National constitution).

1. The organization is an affiliate of _____

2. This organization has the following financial relationship to the affiliate _____

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS (Required)

1. All amendments to this constitution must be made by the following process:

(Note: Suggest the following: (1) Any proposed amendment must be presented in writing to the membership; (2) Discussion should occur at a full meeting; (3) A vote for acceptance should occur at a following meeting...allowing people time to think about the changes; and (4) The amendment shall become part of this constitution upon a vote of _____.)

ARTICLE XI – NONDISCRIMINATION CLAUSE (Required)

_____ (Name of Organization) shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity, age, disability, veteran status or sexual orientation in the selection of its members or in its programs unless federal or state laws allow for such exceptions.

ARTICLE XII – STUDENT Activities (Required)

_____ (Name of Organization) shall maintain a current registration form including a list of officers, their addresses, the name of the Faculty Advisor, and the most recently amended constitution with the Office of Student Activities.

Example #2: Sample Constitution and By-Laws⁵

SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

A constitution reflects the policies and procedures of organizations. Since every organization is different, constitutions will vary in their content. The following sample constitution contains areas typically addressed in constitutions and possible wording. When writing a constitution, however, student organizations should be sure that their constitution reflects the policies and procedures of their particular organization.

Constitution of "Name of Organization"

Preamble

We, the members of "Name of Organization" do hereby establish this Constitution in order that our purpose be realized to its fullest extent.

Article I - Name

The name of the organization will be "Name of Organization" henceforth referred to as "Name of Organization"

Article II - Purpose

"Name of Organization" is established for the expressed purpose of developing leadership skills as well as an awareness of social responsibilities to encourage students to participate in public affairs.

"Name of Organization" understands and is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities of abiding by University of Maryland, College Park policies.

Article III - Membership

Active membership shall be limited to persons officially connected with the University of Maryland, College Park as faculty, staff or registered students. Students enrolled in the spring semester as well as students enrolled in summer school are eligible for summer membership. *(For groups wishing to receive Graduate Student Government funding, this section may stipulate that active voting membership is limited to currently registered graduate students.)* In addition, the following requirements are necessary to constitute active membership:

Payment in full of financial obligations as determined by organization. *(For groups wishing to receive GSG funding, the language of this section would suggest that dues are not required for voting, active membership.)*

⁵ The Office of Graduate Student Life. (2006). Sample Constitution. *University of Maryland*. Received on October 2, 2006 from <http://www.union.umd.edu/GSL/organizations/constitution.html>.

Attendance of at least 75% of all meetings during a given semester.

Active participation in all activities sponsored by "Name of Organization" unless the activity interferes with either scholastic or financial constraints.

"Name of Organization" openly admits students to its membership and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, personal appearance, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

Article IV - Officers

"Name of Organization" will be governed by the following means:

An elected President (or other designated officer) will preside at all meetings of "Name of Organization" the President will maintain the power to appoint all committee chairpersons, shall present all motions to the body present and shall be present at 90% of the meetings of "Name of Organization"

"Name of Organization" shall also maintain a Vice President. The Vice President's duties shall be to preside at all meetings and functions that the President cannot attend.

Club members shall also elect a Secretary-Treasurer who will handle all dues, accounts, new members, rule observances at stated meetings, protocol, etc.

The role and duties of the faculty/staff advisor shall include attending meetings, providing counsel to the organization's officers, etc.

(Student organizations wishing to secure Graduate Student Government funding should be certain to note in this section of their constitution that the executive officers of the organization must be currently registered graduate students.

Article V - Operations

1. Voting Eligibility

Those members meeting all requirements of active membership as set forth in Article III will be granted voting privileges.

2. Election Process

All officers shall be elected by a majority vote of eligible voting members of "Name of Organization." All elections will be held on an annual basis during the month of _____.

The President will take nominations from the floor, the nomination process must be closed and the movement seconded. The nominated parties will be allowed to vote.

All voting shall be done by secret ballot to be collected and tabulated by the Secretary-Treasurer and one voting member of "Name of Organization" appointed by the outgoing President.

3. Removal

Any officer of "Name of Organization" in violation of the Organization's purpose or constitution may be removed from office by the following process:

- a. A written request by at least three members of the Organization.
- b. Written notification to the officer of the request, asking the officer to be present at the next meeting and prepared to speak.
- c. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is necessary to remove the officer.

4. Meetings

All meetings will occur on a weekly basis or other regular basis at a time selected by Name of Organization and will follow the procedure set forth below:

- Attendance
- Report by the President
- Committee reports
- Vote on all committee motions and decisions
- Any other business put forward by the members of the club
- Dismissal by the President

Article VI - Finances

"Name of Organization" will finance the activities it engages in by the following means:

Membership dues (appropriate amount set by "Name of Organization")

"Name of Organization" will submit a budget to the Student Government Association Finance Committee or Graduate Student Government Finance Committee on an annual basis and request funding appropriate to the effective operation of the organization for each year.

Article VII - Amendments

The constitution is binding to all members of the "Name of Organization". But the constitution is not binding unto itself.

Amendments to the constitution may be proposed in writing by any voting member of "Name of Organization" at any meeting at which 2/3 of the voting members is present.

These amendments will be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the executive council or other officer grouping.

Proposed amendments will become effective following approval of two-thirds (2/3)-majority vote of active members.

Article VIII - Registration Renewal

"Name of Organization" will apply to the Office of Campus Programs for registration on an annual basis one month after "Name of Organization's" new officer elections.

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Registering the Organization

Most colleges/universities require student organizations to register with their Student Life Department. Registration often provides for official identification as an affiliated group. Registering with the college/university can have several benefits such as:

- Use of college/university facilities for programs & meetings
- Use of college/university program support at college/university rates
- Inclusion in college/university calendars and listings along with dissemination of your organization's publicity and information on campus
- Consultation and advice from college/university staff, including program resource information and services
- Funding from the college/university, if your organization is eligible
- Tax exempt status for most purchases
- Use of cash collection materials at programs
- Fiscal advice about budgets and accounting/bookkeeping procedures
- Information on the laws of the city and policies of the college/university
- Access to college/university server to create an email account and website for the organization
- Recognition as a college/university affiliate
- Use of college/university printing and copying services
- Use of bulletin boards, outdoor signboards, and booths on campus grounds
- Permission to use college/university grounds to host major events, such as guest speakers
- Rental of college/university vehicles

Registration requirements and benefits vary so be sure to check with your Student Life Department.

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

How to Get Funding

Funding is essential for student organizations. An adequate amount of funds allows for event planning, publicity, office supplies, resources, and much more. There are several ways to secure funding for your organization including student government bodies, college/university funds, and fundraising. *Each college/university has a different policy regarding funding for student organizations so be sure to check with your Student Life Department to find out how your organization can get funded.*

Need additional funding? Check out the CONNECT E-Zine for possible funding sources. Not registered for the CONNECT E-Zine? Register today on page 8.

Student Government Bodies

Several colleges/universities have student government bodies that provide funding for student organizations. These include, but are not limited to, Associated Students Organizations and Residence Hall Associations.

Associated Students Organizations

Some college/universities have an Associated Students Organization (often titled, "Associated Students of (name of college/university)." These organizations may have different branches, such as: Academic Assembly; Student Assembly; Undergraduate Student Government; Graduate Student Association; and Executive, Legislative, and/or Programming Board. The general purpose of an Associated Students Organization is to serve as a voice of students to the college/university administration and surrounding community. While each organization and each branch of the organization has a different function, some provide funding to student organizations.

For example, Programming Board, a branch of the Associated Students of Michigan State University, was created to organize, to facilitate, and to execute student programming of an all-university nature. Meaning, the Programming Board allocates funding to a set of organizations with the intent of creating events that enrich the life of students that attend MSU. Programming Board holds a little over 20% of student-tax dollars collected by ASMSU and redistributes it through a plethora of programs including speakers, concerts, cultural shows, and other entertaining and/or educational events, such as Take Back the Night and MSU Pow-Wow.⁶

⁶ Associated Students of Michigan State University. (2006). Retrieved on November 11, 2006 from <http://www.asmsu.msu.edu/main.php>.

Residence Hall Associations

Larger colleges/universities which have residence halls often have what is called a Residence Hall Association (RHA) – a form of student government that acts as a representative body of residents in the residence halls of the college/university. RHA's may also work to create safe environments and improve the quality of living for individuals residing in the residence halls. RHA membership usually includes one representative from each hall council (the student government body of one specific or a group of residence halls) and may also include one representative from multicultural councils or student organizations.⁷

While RHA's primarily give funds to residence hall councils, they may also provide smaller amounts of funding to student organizations. *Check with your Residence Hall Association to see if your organization is eligible for funds.*

College/University Funds

Another possible funding source comes from the college/university itself. Some colleges/universities provide funds to student organizations if they are registered. *See the Registering the Organization of this handbook for details.*

In addition, different departments may also provide funding for events. For example, the Women's Department may provide partial funding if the organization's event is linked to women's issues and if the Women's Department can be listed as a co-sponsor. *More about co-sponsorship can be found in the Event Planning and Coalition Building sections.*

Finally, some offices of university administrators may provide funding for events. For example, at Michigan State University, groups may ask the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs for financial assistance with event planning. At Stanford University, organizations may ask the Dean of Students for additional funding for events.

Fundraising

Some colleges/universities will allow student organizations to participate in fundraising activities as a method of funding the organization. If this is the case for your organization, there are several methods of fundraising. Below are some ideas, but they do not encompass all fundraising activities. We encourage you to be creative and generate new fundraising techniques that are unique to your organization.

Examples of Fundraising Activities

⁷ Michigan State University Residence Hall Association. (2006). Retrieved on November 11, 2006 from <http://www.rha.msu.edu/>.

- Bake Sale - Students typically sell small, cheap, and home-cooked baked goods. *Check your college/university's policies on selling food on campus.*
- Little Caesar's Pizza Kits – http://www.pizzakit.com/lcpk_hiw.asp
- Flower Sales – Visit a local florist, buy flowers, then sell them for \$1 a piece.
- Penny Wars – Divide into 2 teams and see who collects the most pennies.
- Date Auctions – Auction off dates with members
- Jar Guessing Activity – Fill a jar with candy and ask people to donate to guess how many candies are in the jar. The winner gets the jar of candy.
- Team Up with a Local Vendor – Work out a deal with a local vendor where the organization will set up a table in the store for a set amount of time. The organization gives out coupons for the vendor and will receive a set percentage of the sales that take place during that time period. (Vendors may include small restaurants, fast food chains, ice cream shops, etc.)
- Krispy Kreme – <http://www.krispykreme.com/fund.html>
- Chef-Co – <http://www.chef-co.com/>

Campus Compact

In addition to the funding options listed above, Michigan Campus Compact (MCC) offers grants to student organizations in Michigan. MCC awards Venture Grants to individuals or groups from member institutions (specific colleges/universities that are members of MCC) to encourage the development or expansion of community service programs, service-learning opportunities, and/or civic engagement activities. Community service includes volunteer activities/projects which meet the needs of the community. Service-learning integrates within the academic curriculum a thoughtfully organized service experience and provides structured opportunities for students to think, talk, or write about their service participation (reflection). Civic engagement includes engaging students in a public purpose, social action, advocacy, community-based research, citizenship and/or renewing the civic mission of higher education.⁸ For more information about these grants, please visit <http://www.micampuscompact.org/venture.asp>.

⁸ Michigan Campus Compact. (2007). *Venture Grants*. Retrieved on February 22, 2007 from <http://www.micampuscompact.org/venture.asp>.

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Recruitment and Publicity

The strength of an organization is dependent on its membership – the larger the membership, the larger the strength. Recruitment is the building block of any organization. To get started with recruitment, try asking the following questions:

- Who are the potential members?
- How can we get them interested in our organization?
- What are the benefits of being a member?
- What draws people to our organization?
- Realistically, how much time, money, and energy can be spent on recruitment?
- What do I personally get out of the organization?
- What is the purpose of the organization?
- What are the goals for the upcoming year?
- What makes the organization unique?

When developing a recruitment strategy, it is important to think of all the different reasons people may join the organization. For example, people may join to build a résumé, to make friends, to achieve something, to gain student government skills, etc. You will want to make sure that your recruitment efforts target all types of members that you want to join the organization.

It is also important to use both active and passive methods of recruitment. Active tactics include face-to-face interactions, recruitment booths, class presentations, etc. Passive methods may include posters, flyers, and email announcements. Passive methods should not be the primary recruitment efforts; rather, they should supplement the more active methods.

Finally, when creating a strategy for recruitment, remember that the process of recruitment is on-going and never-ending. Members come and go with time and in order for the organization to be successful, a consistent membership base should be established and maintained.

Recruitment and Publicity Techniques

- *Face-to-Face* – talk to people you think would be interested in joining the organization.
- *Posters/Flyers* – place posters/flyers around campus with information about the group, meeting time and location, and contact information.
- *Recruitment Tables* – set up a table with information about the organization that people can take with them and include a sign-up sheet on the table.
Many college/universities have a student

You can use the CONNECT network to see which recruitment strategies have worked best for other student organizations.

organization fair where all student organizations set up tables and students interested in joining organizations browse through the tables. Check with your Student Life Department.

- *Presentations* – in your classes, give a quick presentation about the organization and pass around a sign-up sheet. You can also ask professors of classes relating to the organization’s purpose to give presentations about the organization.
- *Host an Event* – put on an event to let people know about the organization.
- *Recruitment Meetings* – make some of the organization’s meetings be recruitment meetings where people interested in joining can come and learn about the organization.
- *Email Announcements* – ask other student organizations and college/university departments to send a message to their members announcing the organization.
- *Listservs* – post information about the organization on listservs that may relate to the purpose of the organization.
- *Campus Television* – some college/universities have a campus television station that may have ad space available.
- *Campus Newspaper* – some colleges/universities have a campus newspaper where organizations can purchase ad space.
- *Campus Radio* – some colleges/universities have a campus radio station that allows student organizations to announce information about their group.
- *Disability Services Offices* – ask the office to send an email to all students registered with their office. They may also keep flyers/brochures in their office to hand out to students.

Finding a Meeting Location/Office Space

Student organizations need an information hub – a place to store all supplies, documents, etc. as well as a place to hold meetings. In some cases, this may be the same place and in others, it may not.

Office Space

Depending on the college/university, office space may be provided for the organization. *Check with your Student Life Department.* If not, it is likely that the organization's office will be the dorm rooms, apartments, or houses of the executive board members. In which case there will not be a central location for storing information. In this case, the Executive Board members are responsible for organizing and keeping track of all information and materials relating to their job duties.

Meeting Location

Again, depending on the college/university, a meeting location may be provided. If not, here are some ideas for a meeting location.

- Classroom
- A room provided by the Disability Services Office
- The Multi-Cultural Center
- Space in the Residence Halls
- A room in the Student Union
- Coffee Shop or Small Cafe
- Community Room

Usually, student organizations are required to go through some type of formal process of requesting and reserving these types of facilities. In addition, the college/university may have specific policies relating to the space, such as food and drink; set-up and clean-up; fees; and reservation and cancellation. *Check with your Student Life Department regarding meeting locations and policies.*

Accessibility

When selecting meeting locations and office space, it is important to make sure it will be accessible to everyone. To assess the accessibility of the space, consider the following:

- Can someone in a wheelchair get to the location, move around easily in the space, have integrated seating, etc.?
- Is there Braille on any signs in the area?
- Is the contrast and height of signage correct?
- Is there an elevator if the location is not on ground level?
- Is there an automatic door opener at the entrance to the building?
- Are there major distractions in the room that would serve as a problem for people with ADD/ADHD?
- Is the meeting location large enough to comfortably accommodate everyone who will attend the meeting?
- Is the location close to a bus stop for people using public transportation?
- Are there accessible restrooms near the meeting location?
- Are service animals welcome without resistance?
- Do you have access to American Sign Language interpreters?
- Is the area too noisy? (Individuals with personal attendants need to be able to whisper their needs to the attendant)
- Is there room to pace? (Individuals with mental illness or ADD/ADHD may need this)

What does an accessible location look like?
CONNECT can help you identify features of an accessible venue.

Setting Meeting Times

Many organizations think scheduling meeting times is rather simple, but what they don't realize is that a lot more goes into it than one realizes. There are several decisions that need to be made when determining a meeting schedule for the organization, such as:

- What will the time interval be for the general assembly meetings? (weekly, bi-weekly, once a month, as needed)
- What will the time interval be for the Executive Board meetings?
- What day of the week will the meetings take place?
- What time of day will the meetings take place?
- When and how often will any committees hold meetings?

To help make these decisions, try answering the following questions:

- Where will the meeting be held? (The buildings on campus may have specific hours of operation.)
- Are there meetings of other student organizations at the same time? If so, do we have overlapping membership? Will this cause a problem?
- What is the purpose of the organization?
- What does the organization want to accomplish during meetings?
- What is the purpose of the meetings?
- Are there several classes in session during the meeting time?
- When are the most members likely to attend?
- Do students leave campus a lot during this time?
- Will the meeting time compete with major campus and sporting events?

Remember that meeting times can be changed. While some organizations set a meeting time and stick with it, it is not mandatory. In fact, you may find that it would be better to change a meeting time when and if you hit a period where attendance is low for an extended period of time. The organization may want to consider having flexible meetings where the day and time alternates from week to week or semester to semester. Whatever the case, it is up to the organization to decide what will work best for the specific needs of the organization.

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Conducting Meetings

The environment of your organization's meetings can have a huge influence on your members. If your members have a positive experience at your meetings, they are likely to return time and time again. However, if they have a negative experience, it is safe to say, they will probably remove themselves from the organization. So, what makes a meeting a positive experience for members? There are several things to consider when planning and conducting your organization's meetings, such as alternative formats, agenda items, format, facilitation, etc.

Agendas

It is pretty standard for organizations to set agendas for meetings. An agenda is an outline of the topics to be covered during the meeting. There are three main areas to pay attention to when creating an agenda: content, design, and process.

Content

Content is the actual items that get listed on the agenda. The content should include the key topics the organization wants to address or discuss during the meeting (i.e. accessibility barriers, upcoming events, advocacy efforts, discussion questions, constitution changes, etc.).

When deciding on content, it can be beneficial to generate the list of agenda items with the executive board, advisor of the group, and other individuals who play an important role in the organization. These people are often very actively involved with the organization and are aware of the topics that should be covered on the agenda. At the same time, it is also important to allow general assembly members to have a part in deciding the content of the agenda. Doing so, helps create an environment where general assembly members feel valued, included, and as though their voice/opinion matters to the organization. This could be done in one of three ways:

- 1) The agenda is prepared by the executive board and then sent to the general assembly members prior to the meeting with an announcement asking for suggestions/additions/deletions.
- 2) The agenda is prepared by the executive board prior to the meeting. Then the first agenda item is always "approval of agenda" so the first thing discussed is the content of the agenda itself. During this time, the facilitator of the meeting asks all present members if they have any additional agenda items they would like to have covered and, if so, the members decide where it will be placed on the agenda.
- 3) The agenda is prepared by the executive board prior to the meeting and there is always an agenda item at the end such as "new issues or concerns,"

“announcements,” or something similar to allow general assembly members the option to discuss anything they feel is important that may have been missing on the agenda.

Design

Once the content of the agenda has been decided upon, it needs to be put into a logistical order. One may think that the order doesn't matter, but you would be surprised at the unspoken rules of agendas. Often times, whether it is stated or not, people assume that the items that are first on the agenda are, in some way, more important than those further down the list. Even if this is not your organization's intention, some individuals may perceive agendas in this light. Therefore, the order of agenda items can be important.

Once the agenda items are in some sort of order, you may decide to put a suggested time next to each item. Organizations do this to ensure that every item on the agenda gets the time that it deserves. Often times, members can get talking about the first few agenda items and lose track of time. They then find themselves rushing through the remaining topics. When a time is listed next the item, it can serve as a guideline for how much time to spend discussing that particular topic and the facilitator can use the time guidelines as a way to transition from item to item. For example, a facilitator could say, “I've noticed we have spent 15 minutes on this topic. We would like to take the next 5 minutes to wrap up the discussion before moving on to the next item.”

It can also be beneficial to either make copies of the agenda to hand out at the meetings or write them down on a dry erase board or chalkboard so people can follow along. This also allows for late comers to see what they may have missed and seek out that information after the meeting. *If your organization chooses to do this, make sure you can provide a copy of the agenda in alternative formats for individuals requesting such a format. This also applies to any additional handouts or materials that will be distributed during the meeting.*

Process

The process includes how you present each item and how you move through the agenda. Each topic should have a specific approach such as someone reporting to the group, facilitated discussion, brainstorming session, etc. Discussing meeting dynamics at the start may also assist in a smooth process. This could include making sure all members agree on how a decision is made and that each agenda item will be discussed separately. Finally, you may also want to check in with quiet individuals to make sure they have time to speak (without forcing them to speak or making them uncomfortable), and at the same time, confront individuals who may be talking too much and remind them to give others time to speak.

When looking at the process, you may want to ask yourself:

- Are there smooth transitions between topics?
- Are you explaining how you got to this topic and what you hope to accomplish?
- Are members participating?
- Are people staying on topic or jumping all around the board?
- Do members feel their opinions matter?
- Who is doing the majority of the talking?
- Is there positive energy in the group?
- Are people committed to and excited about the task at hand?
- Does anyone look uncomfortable?

Icebreakers

Many organizations choose to start each meeting with an icebreaker. Icebreakers are fun and interactive ways to have members introduce themselves to each other. They can range from answering a simple question to moving around the room. It is best when icebreakers relate to a topic that will be covered in the meeting or when they encourage members to get to know one another. *When deciding on an icebreaker, please pay attention to your membership and the abilities of people in the room. To make members feel included and create a positive experience, it is important to pick an activity that all members can fully participate in.*

Websites with Icebreaker Activities

- *Wilderness* - <http://wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html>
- *Education World* - http://www.education-world.com/back_to_school/index.shtml
- *About* - <http://712educators.about.com/od/icebreakers/>
- *Big Dog Little Dog* - <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/icebreak.html>
- *Kim's Korner* - <http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/classmanagement/icebreakers.html>
- *Wikipedia* - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Icebreaker_\(facilitation\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Icebreaker_(facilitation))
- *Education World* - http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson019.shtml

Want more icebreakers? Students in the CONNECT network are full of ideas.

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Coalition Building⁹

What is a Coalition?

A coalition is a group of individuals and/or organizations with a common interest that decide to work together for a common goal. That goal could be as narrow as obtaining funding for a specific event, or as broad as trying to improve the overall quality of life for most people in the community. By the same token, the individuals and organizations involved might be drawn from a narrow area of interest, or might include representatives of nearly every segment of the community, depending upon the breadth of the issue. Coalitions may be loose associations in which members work for a short time to achieve a specific goal, and then disband. They may also become organizations in themselves, with governing bodies, particular community responsibilities, and funding. Regardless of their size and structure, they exist to create and/or support efforts to reach a particular set of goals.

Get started building a coalition by registering your student group with CONNECT you can be connected to student groups across the state of Michigan.

Why Build a Coalition?

There are a number of reasons why joining or developing a coalition might be a good idea. In general terms, it can concentrate the community's focus on a particular problem, create alliances among those who might not normally work together, and keep the community's approach to issues consistent. In addition, forming coalitions with other groups of similar values, interests, and goals allows members to combine their resources and become more powerful than when they each acted alone. At the same time, coalition members do not need to agree on everything; rather they need one common issue to focus on allowing them to work together despite differences. Some more specific reasons for forming a coalition might include:

- *To pool resources.* A number of organizations and individuals together may have the resources to accomplish a task that none of them could have done singly. In general, people and organizations join coalitions to do just that – to accomplish together what they cannot alone.
- *To empower elements of the community - or the community as a whole - to take control of its future.* This may mean addressing the place of youth in the community, for instance, or looking at economic development in light of globalization and community resources.

⁹ A majority of this section was taken from the Community Toolbox at the University of Kansas - http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/tools_toc.htm.

- *To actually obtain or provide services.* It may take a coalition - either initially or over the long term - to design, obtain funding for, and/or run a needed intervention in the community.
- *To bring about more effective and efficient delivery of programs and eliminate any unnecessary duplication of effort.* Gathering all the players involved in a particular issue can result in a more cohesive and comprehensive intervention. Rather than duplicating their efforts, organizations can split up or coordinate responsibilities in ways that afford more participants access to programs and allow for a greater variety of services.
- *To increase communication among groups and break down stereotypes.* Bringing together groups and individuals from many sectors of the community can create alliances where there was little contact before. Working together toward common goals can help people break down barriers and preconceptions, and learn to trust one another.
- *To revitalize the sagging energies of members of groups who are trying to do too much alone.* A coalition can help to bolster efforts around an issue. For people who've worked too long in a vacuum, the addition of other hands to the task can be a tremendous source of new energy and hope.
- *To plan and launch community-wide initiatives on a variety of issues.* In addition to addressing immediately pressing issues or promoting or providing services, coalitions can serve to unify efforts around long-term campaigns in such areas as smoking cessation, community economic development, or environmental preservation.
- *To develop and use political clout to gain services or other benefits for the community.* A unified community coalition can advocate for the area more effectively than a number of disparate groups and individuals working alone. In addition, a wide-ranging coalition can bring to bear political pressure from all sectors of the community, and wield a large amount of political power.
- *To create long-term, permanent social change.* Real change usually takes place over a period of time through people gaining trust, sharing ideas, and getting beyond their preconceptions to the real issues underlying community needs. A coalition, with its structure of cooperation among diverse groups and individuals and its problem-solving focus, can ease and sometimes accelerate the process of change in a community.
- *To address an urgent situation.*

Benefits of Starting a Coalition

The benefits of coalition building go beyond increased power in relation to the opposition. Coalition building may also strengthen the members internally, enabling them to be more effective in other arenas. Some other key advantages to coalition building include:

- A coalition of organizations can win on more fronts than a single organization working alone and increase the potential for success.
- A coalition can bring more expertise and resources to bear on complex issues, where the technical or personnel resources of any one organization would not be sufficient.
- A coalition can develop new leaders. As experienced group leaders step forward to lead the coalition, openings are created for new leaders in the individual groups. The new, emerging leadership strengthens the groups and the coalition.
- A coalition will increase the impact of each organization's effort. Involvement in a coalition means there are more people who have a better understanding of your issues and more people advocating for your side.
- A coalition will increase available resources. Not only will physical and financial resources be increased, but each group will gain access to the contacts, connections, and relationships established by other groups.
- A coalition may raise its members' public profiles by broadening the range of groups involved in a conflict. The activities of a coalition are likely to receive more media attention than those of any individual organization.
- A coalition can build a lasting base for change. Once groups unite, each group's vision of change broadens and it becomes more difficult for opposition groups to disregard the coalition's efforts as dismissible or as special interests.
- A successful coalition is made up of people who have never worked together before. Coming from diverse backgrounds and different viewpoints, they have to figure out how to respect each other's differences and get something big accomplished. They have to figure out how each group and its representatives can make their different but valuable contributions to the overall strategy for change. This helps avoid duplication of efforts and improve communication among key players.

How to Start a Coalition

1. Put together a core group. You're probably already not alone in your concerns about the issue at hand, and you may already have a core group - a few individuals or organizations - ready to work at forming a coalition. If not, your first step is to find and make contact with those few individuals and organizations most involved with the issue.

Some reasons why a core group, rather than an individual, should lead the effort:

- A core group will have more contacts and more knowledge of the community than a single individual.
- It will give the idea of a coalition more standing among potential members.
- It will make finding and reaching potential members a much faster process.

- A core group will make the task easier on all the individuals involved, and therefore more likely to get done.
- It shows that the effort has wide support.

There are a few ways to approach assembling a core group:

- *Start with people you know.* If you're a longtime activist on this issue, or if you've been living or working in your community for a while, you have lots of contacts, particularly among others concerned with the same things you are. Use those contacts now, either to pull them into the circle, or to get the names of others who might be part of a core group. Someone who knows you - assuming you have a positive relationship - is usually more easily persuaded than someone who doesn't.
- *Contact people in other student organizations, agencies, and institutions most affected by the issue.*
- *Talk to influential people or people with lots of contacts.*

2. Identify the most important potential coalition members. Especially if your coalition has a narrow and time-limited purpose, there are probably people or organizations you can't do without. It's important to identify them and to target them specifically for membership. There may be a specific person among the target population, or a particular college/university official, without whom nothing can get done. The chances are you - and if not you, then other members of the core group - know this person, or at least know who she is, and have some connection to her.

3. Recruit members to the coalition. Now that your core group is in place, and you've decided on the potential members who are necessary to the success of the coalition, you can start recruiting members. Although it's important to start with the individuals and groups mentioned above, you'll probably want to be as inclusive as possible. It's unusual to hear about a coalition suffering because it has too many members.

Use the networking capacity of your core group to the fullest. The core group can brainstorm a list of possible members, in addition to those deemed essential. Then each member can identify individuals on the list whom he knows personally, or organizations where he has a personal contact. If there are names left on the list without a contact, they can be divided among the members of the core group.

There are a number of ways to contact people and organizations, including:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Phone calls
- E-mail
- Personal letters
- Mass mailings

-
- Public Service Announcements or ads in the media
 - Flyers and posters

Be sure to ask those you talk to for suggestions about other potential members, and try to have them make the contact. That will spread out the work and also give the invitation more credibility, since it comes from someone the contacted person knows. If you are successful, you could end up contacting and recruiting several times the number of people and organizations on your original list.

4. Plan and hold a first meeting. The first meeting of a coalition is important. If it's a high-energy, optimistic gathering that gets people excited, you're off to a good start. If it's depressed and negative, or just boring, it's a good bet that a lot of people won't come back. It's up to the core group - in what may be the last official task they undertake - to plan a meeting that will start the coalition off on the right foot.

There are a number of possibilities for the content of the first meeting. The agenda should depend on your particular issue and purposes, and on the needs of your community, but you'll probably want to include some of the following:

- *Introductions all around.* Everyone present should give a brief statement of who they are, the organization, if any, they're connected with, and the nature of their interest in the issue.
- *Start defining the issue or problem around which the coalition has come together.* This might mean the group coming up with an actual statement, or it might entail an initial discussion, followed by a small group being asked to draft a possible definition for the next meeting.
- *Discuss the structure of the coalition.* What kind of group will it be, how (if at all) will it be run, what kinds of things will it actually do?
- *At least start the process of creating a common vision and agreeing on shared values about the direction of the coalition.* This is the first step toward developing the vision and mission statements that will define the coalition and guide its work.
- *Discuss a procedure for forming an action plan.* Again, this may result in an actual, or at least a preliminary plan, or it may lead either to the appointment of a smaller group to draft a plan, or to the establishment of a procedure by which the larger group will generate a plan over a set period of time.
- *Review the things to be done before the next meeting and who has agreed to do them.* As mentioned above, it's important that people leave the first meeting feeling that something has been accomplished. If there are tasks being worked on and specific results expected at the next meeting - even if those results are simply statements or preliminary plans to react to - coalition members will have that feeling.
- *Schedule at least the next meeting.* It may be possible to develop a regular meeting schedule at this first meeting, or it may make more sense to

schedule only the next meeting and wait until the membership stabilizes and some other people join before creating a long-term schedule.

5. Follow up on the first meeting. You've held a successful first meeting - terrific! The job of building a coalition has only begun, however. First, you have to follow up to make sure that there will be a well-attended second meeting at which work can continue.

- *Distribute the minutes of the first meeting and reminders about the next meeting to those who attended, and send them out with invitations to potential new members as well.* Try to widen your net as much as possible. Get to the folks you missed the first time, or to those whose names you've gotten from people who attended the first meeting.
- *Follow up on the groups or individuals who are working on tasks assigned at the first meeting.* Offer help, attend meetings, try to involve other people with relevant skills or knowledge - do everything you can to make sure those tasks get accomplished.
- *If there are committees or task forces forming, try to recruit new members for them.* The real work of the coalition will probably be done in these small groups, so it's important that they have the right members. If you know people with expertise that could be used in particular ways, grab them. Most people will respond if they're asked, especially if they're asked because you value what they bring to the task.
- *Keep looking for new coalition members.*
- *Keep track of the fundamental building blocks of the coalition that aren't in place yet.* If the group hasn't yet decided on a structure or a coordinating body, you need to make sure that the decision doesn't get pushed aside, but that it's either in the works or being actively considered. If there's no action on an action plan, you need to provide the push to get it going.

6. Next steps. There are a number of specific things - some of which you've already started in that first meeting - that need to be done to make sure that the coalition keeps moving forward.

- *Gather information.* In order to plan for action, you need as much information about the problem or issue - and about the community - as possible. Many organizations, particularly those most involved with the issue at hand, are likely to have statistics or other info on hand. The U.S. Census can be a good source of demographic information, as can local colleges or universities and local government departments. The more information you can gather, the easier it becomes to define the problem, to know if you're addressing something that's actually a major community issue, and to plan a strategy that will address it effectively.
- *Finish creating vision and mission statements.* These can be hashed out in a small group after everyone has had input in a larger meeting, or you can actually

try to generate them in the larger group itself (perhaps by splitting people up into smaller groups, then coming back together to reconcile differences). It's important that there be agreement on the wording and intent of these statements because they will be the foundation of the coalition, referred to again and again over time as the group tries to decide whether to tackle particular issues.

Everyone has to feel ownership of them if the coalition is to develop an identity.

- *Complete an action plan.* The coalition's action plan is intertwined with both its structure and its vision and mission. In practice, coalitions often start with a sense of what they need to do, and their structures, visions, and missions grow from that.
- *Finish the work of designing a structure for the coalition.* Again, this has to be a shared task, with everyone having a chance to contribute ideas. There is such a broad range of possibilities here - from practically no governance to a very clear, formal hierarchy - that it's crucial that the group come up with a form that everyone can live with. Once a structure has been agreed upon, there may still be the need for writing bylaws and otherwise formalizing it.
- *Elect officers, or a coordinating or steering committee.* Once there's agreement about the structure of the coalition, it's time for members to decide whether they want some sort of governing body, and to choose it so that the work of the coalition can go ahead.
- *Determine what other resources - financial, material, informational, etc. - you need, develop a plan for getting them, and decide who's going to be responsible for carrying it out.* If you already have funding for a paid staff person, finding resources may be one of her primary responsibilities...or it may not. A committee of the coalition may have that responsibility, or someone may simply take it on. Part of creating a strategic plan that encompasses your vision, mission, and action plan is looking at the resources you'll need to reach your goals and planning for obtaining those resources.
- *Start the hard work of maintaining the coalition over time.* Once your coalition is a going concern, it still needs care and feeding. After it's been around for a while and had some success, people may start to take it for granted, or the original members may start to burn out or to get stale. Careful maintenance for the long term is an extremely important task.

7. Some general guidelines for getting a coalition off the ground. In addition to the specifics above, there are some more general elements to starting a coalition:

- *Communicate, communicate, communicate.* Make sure that lines of communication within the coalition and among the coalition, the media, the college/university, and the community are wide open. Open communication will assure that no one feels left out of the loop, and that everyone has the information necessary to make coalition efforts successful. Good communication with the media and the community will increase your chances for publicity and support when you need them.

- *Be as inclusive and participatory as you can.* Work at making the coalition a group in which anyone in the community will feel welcome, and continue to invite people to join after the first meeting. Try to involve everyone in the coalition in generating vision and mission statements, planning, and major decisions. The more people that feel ownership of the coalition itself, the harder they'll be willing to work to achieve its goals, and the less likely they'll be to allow turf issues or minor conflicts to get in the way of the coalition's progress.
- *Network like crazy.* Try to involve, or at least to keep informed, as many other groups in the community as possible. Let them know what you're doing, invite them to coalition meetings (to make presentations, if appropriate, or just to see what's going on), invite them to join if they're interested, educate them about the issue. If groups in the community are informed about your work, they're more likely to be supportive, and to tell others about what you're doing as well. They may also have better connections to policy makers and/or college/university officials than you have, and may be able to help you approach them.
- *Try, at least at the beginning, to set concrete, reachable goals.* Success is great glue - achieving reachable goals early can help a coalition develop the strength to later spend the years it may take to pursue and achieve long-term goals.
- *Be creative about meetings.* Community activists often feel that they spend their whole lives in meetings. If each coalition meeting can be different, and have some elements of fun to it, you'll be much more likely to retain both membership and interest in the coalition. Some possibilities include rotating the responsibility for meetings among the groups comprising the coalition; having only a small number of meetings a year, each with a particular theme, and doing most of the work of the coalition in committees or task forces; or regularly bringing in exciting presentations on the issue or in areas that relate to it.
- *Be realistic, and keep your promises.* If you're not sure you can do it, don't say you will. If you say you will, be sure you do.
- *Acknowledge diversity among your members, and among their ideas and beliefs.* Your coalition will probably mirror the cultural, economic, racial, ethnic, and religious diversity of your community, and will certainly represent a diversity of opinion. Not everyone will agree with everything the coalition does or wants to do, and sometimes the minority opinion will be right. Make sure to take everyone's opinion and restraints into account, and to use diversity as a spur to discussion, rather than a source of division.
- *Praise and reward outstanding contributions and celebrate your successes.* In addition to success itself, the celebration of success is a great way to cement the bonds among members of a coalition. Whether through individual or group awards, or through parties or other events, celebration of

achievement will help your coalition thrive, and will give you a much-needed opportunity to remember that there's a reason you're doing all this.

Guidelines to Building a Successful Coalition

- 1) **Choose unifying issues.** The most effective coalitions come together around a common issue. Make sure the development of group goals is a joint process, rather than one or two group representatives deciding the goals and then inviting others to join.
- 2) **Understand and respect each group's self interest.** There must be a balance between the goals and needs of the coalition and of the individual organizations.
- 3) **Respect each group's internal process.** It is important to understand and respect the differences among groups. These differences are often apparent in processes or chains of command for decision-making. Make a commitment to learning about the unique values, history, interests, structure, and agenda of the other groups and organizations.
- 4) **Agree to disagree.**
- 5) **Structure decision-making carefully.**
- 6) **Distribute credit fairly.** Recognize that contributions vary. Appreciate different contributions. Each organization will have something different to offer. Each one is important, so be sure to acknowledge them all, whether they be volunteers, meeting space, funding, copying, publicity, leafleting, passing resolutions, or other resources.
- 7) **Give and take.** It is important to build on existing relationships and connections with other organizations. Don't just ask for or expect support; be prepared to give it.
- 8) **Develop a common strategy.** The strength of a coalition is in its unity. Work together with other organizations to develop a strategy that makes sense for everyone. The tactics you choose should be ones that all the organizations can endorse. If not, the tactics should be taken by individual organizations independent of the coalition.
- 9) **Be strategic.** Building coalitions in and of themselves requires a good strategy. Which organizations you ask, who asks them, in which order to ask them are all questions to figure out.
- 10) **To ensure consistency, send the same representative to each coalition meeting.** This helps meetings run more smoothly. These individuals should also be decision-making members of the organizations they represent.
- 11) **Formalize your coalition.** It is best to make explicit agreements. Make sure everyone understands what their responsibilities and rights are. Being clear can help prevent conflicts.

Barriers to Starting a Coalition

There are often barriers to starting a coalition, and it's important to be aware of and anticipate them, because they may dictate the process the coalition will have to follow in order to begin successfully. Among the most likely:

- **Turf issues.** Organizations are often very sensitive about sharing their work, their target populations, and especially their funding. Part of the work of starting a coalition may be to convince a number of organizations that working together will in fact both benefit all of them and better address their common issues.
- **Bad history.** Organizations, individuals, or the community as a whole may have had experiences in the past that have convinced them that working with certain others - or working together at all - is simply not possible. A new coalition may have to contend with this history before it can actually start the work it needs to do.
- **Minimal organizational capacity.** It might be necessary to find a coordinator, or for one or more individuals or organizations to find a way to share the burden of organization for the new group if it is to develop beyond - or as far as - a first meeting.
- **Funding.** The difficulty of finding funding is an obvious obstacle. Less obvious are the dangers of available funding that pushes the coalition in the wrong direction or requires it to act too quickly to address the issue effectively. New coalitions have to be alert to funding possibilities from all quarters, and also have to be vigilant about the kind of funding they apply for and accept.
- **Failure to provide and create leadership within the coalition.** Coalitions demand a very special kind of collaborative leadership. If that leadership isn't available and can't be developed from within the coalition, its existence is probably at risk. It may be necessary to bring in an outside facilitator and/or training in collaborative leadership to salvage the situation.
- **The perceived - or actual - costs of working together outweigh the benefits for many coalition members.** The task here may be to find ways to increase benefits and decrease costs for the individuals and organizations for whom this is the case if the coalition is to survive.

Disability Services Offices

Many colleges/universities have a specific office that assist people with disabilities throughout their time on campus. Each disability office may have a different purpose and therefore serve different functions. Some disability offices only provide services to individuals with disabilities. Other offices may expand their functions to include raising awareness about disability issues and/or increasing access to the college/university's programs, facilities, and activities. Some of the most common services provided by disability offices include:

- Adaptive computers
- Audio tape recorded text books
- Note takers
- Extended time for tests
- Alternative testing site
- Large print materials
- Copies of overheads
- Information about accessible transportation
- Readers/scribes
- Interpreters

Disability offices not only serve as a resource for people with disabilities, but they can also serve as a resource for disability student organizations. Creating a working relationship with your college/university's disability office can have several benefits for your student organization including:

- *Access to Students with Disabilities* – Since disability offices serve individuals with disabilities, they often have access to the students. This may be an e-mail listserv or contact list. Some offices may be willing to send out your organization's announcements to the students they work with. They may also be willing to tell students about your organization when they register with the disability office.
- *Publicity* – The disability office may be willing to put information about your organization and events your organization is sponsoring out on display in their office. For example, they may put brochures on the main reception desk or highlight your organization's successes on a bulletin board.
- *Access to College/University Officials* – Many disability offices work with college/university officials in some capacity. Staff of disability offices often will be able to give your organization direction as to who the key players are for any given issue your organization may want to address.
- *Support* – Disability offices can serve as a great source of support. Any student organization will encounter struggles either with group dynamics, accessibility, college/university barriers, lack of education, or some other difficulty. If your

organization has a relationship with the staff of the disability offices, the staff may provide support, offer suggestions, and re-energize your organization in times of despair.

- *Alternative Formats* – A majority of disability offices have the technology and resources to create materials in alternative formats. Your organization may be able to ask the disability office for assistance in making your organization's materials available in Braille, large print, on tape, etc.
- *Interpreting Services* – If your organization needs to have an interpreter for an event or meeting, the disability office can help make that connection. Some colleges/universities will actually provide the interpreting services while others may be able to refer you to an outside interpreting service.

Not all disability offices have the capacity, staff, and/or resources to provide these benefits. Please check with your college/university's disability office to see what type of relationship will work best for their office and your organization.

Planning an Event

Hosting an event can be a great way to gain membership and contribute to campus culture. It can also create a sense of community and accomplishment among group members. So, where do you start? The first step in event planning is developing ideas for the event. Try thinking about:

- What's your goal?
- What do you want the participants to get from attending your event?
- What would the overall "theme" be?
- What kinds of events would help you meet our goal?
- How can you contribute to the campus culture?
- What types of events has your organization put on before?
- Where the past events successful?

Need ideas? Check out the CONNECT website for events that other student groups have put on across Michigan. Once you have the event planned contact us at CONNECT@prosynergy.org so your event can be advertised in the E-Zine.

Once you have decided on the event you want to have, it is time to begin planning. Planning an event can be a long and detailed process. It can be difficult to remember every last detail that needs to be completed. To aid in this process, the following pages include a delegation list, a timeline, and a checklist for event planning.

Timeline for Event Planning¹⁰

Here is a timeline for you to use as an aid in your event planning process:

Six weeks prior to Event

- 1) Set deadlines for tasks that need to be completed.
- 2) Order items of publicity from the artist/lecture's representative.
- 3) Brainstorm for publicity and/or promotional ideas.

Five weeks prior to the Event

- 1) Check contract specifications with artist's/lecturer's representative.
- 2) Contact Venue to confirm set up.
- 3) Contact the Transportation Office for a vehicle if needed.
- 4) Start making arrangements for publicity and/or promotion.
- 5) Contact Program Services for technical requirements.
- 6) Make Food Services arrangements.
- 7) Make Ticket Sales arrangements, if needed.
- 8) Make a request for Ushers.

Four weeks prior to Event

- 1) Finalize publicity and / or promo details.
- 2) Start publicity and promotion of show.

Three - Four weeks prior to Event

- 1) Continue distribution of publicity and promo of event.
- 2) Put tickets on sale, if appropriate.

One Week prior to Event

- 1) Give last big publicity and / or promo push.
- 2) Check ticket sales, if appropriate.
- 3) Confirm with the artist's / lecturer's representative.
- 4) Finalize all details with Program Services, Centers Reservations, Food Service, and Ticket Box office.

Day of Event!

- 1) Pick up the performer's check.
- 2) Pick up the Dressing Room Keys (if needed).
- 3) Have a copy of the contract with you for the show.

Prior to Doors Opening

- 1) Check the room set up.
- 2) Check the Stage set up.

¹⁰ University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point - http://www.uwsp.edu/centers/caro/planning_event.asp

- 3) Check the conditions / cleanliness of the room.
- 4) Introduce yourself to the technician(s) working the show.
- 5) Introduce yourself to the Ushers working the show.
- 6) Introduce yourself to the Building managers on duty.
- 7) Set up merchandise sales area (if needed).
- 8) Place up promo for future shows.

During the Event

- 1) Is there enough seating?
- 2) Release Ushers when appropriate.

After The Event

- 1) Pay the Performer.
- 2) Check the Dressing room and venue for leftover items / cleanliness.
- 3) Thank everyone for the help.
- 4) Take down any promo that you put up.

Event Checklist

The following is a checklist of things your organization may or may not want/need to do when planning an event.

Prior to the Event:

- Decide on the event
- Decide on sponsoring organization(s)
- Make a list of things to be done and who will do what
- Create a timeline
- Create a budget
- Complete paperwork to host an event
- Secure funding
- Book performer/presenter
- Prepare and complete contract for performer/presenter
- Arrange for any accommodations for performer/presenter (travel, hotel, transportation, meals, etc.)
- Reserve venue/facility space
- Complete necessary paperwork for reserving venue/facility space
- Create publicity materials
- Display publicity materials
- Send out press releases
- Place an ad in the newspaper
- Make arrangements for food/snacks
- Arrange transportation
- Purchase all necessary supplies/materials
- Secure any rental equipment (tables, stage, audio equipment, etc.)

During the Event:

- Sell tickets at door, if applicable
- Set up and take down
- Refreshment table, if applicable
- Sell merchandise, if applicable
- Set out water for performer/presenter

After the Event:

- Send out thank you cards
- Remove publicity materials
- Complete payments
- Return any equipment
- Clean up venue
- Debrief with group what went well and what to do differently next time

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 100
East Lansing, MI 48823



(866) 532-2669 (toll-free)
(517) 333-2677 (fax)
connect@prosynergy.org

Maintaining Membership

A common struggle for student organizations is maintaining membership. Part of attending a college/university is graduating and moving on in life – causing a consistent decrease in membership. At the same time, there is always a new batch of incoming students each year that carry the label of “potential member.” (Refer to the Recruitment and Publicity section for tips.) The question is how to keep students involved throughout their duration at the college/university. You got them in the door and they liked the first meeting or two – now what? How do you keep them coming back and keep them involved?

Steps for Membership Success

- 1) Make new members feel welcome at EVERY meeting and event.
 - a. Take time to do introductions.
 - b. Show an interest in members (how they are doing, what their major is, where they live, what they bring to the table, etc.)
 - c. At each meeting have one agenda item that allows members to discuss their experiences on campus relating to disability. During this process, make sure everyone has a chance to speak and that one person’s experience does not dominate the conversation.
 - d. Take time to bring new members up to speed before or during the first part of the meeting.
- 2) Provide meaningful opportunities for involvement.
 - a. Put together committees that members can join (publicity committee, event planning, etc.)
 - b. Delegate tasks to members (someone to make copies, hang flyers, conduct the icebreaker activity, etc.)
- 3) Review organizational goals annually or semi-annually.
 - a. Use this to get members motivated for the upcoming semester or year.
 - b. Create lists of projects the organization wants to accomplish during the semester or year.
- 4) Provide opportunities for member input into the organization.
 - a. Always ask for feedback from your members.
 - b. Include members in the agenda setting process.
 - c. Allow members to vote and use this as the process for making decisions that will affect the organization and its functioning.
- 5) Build a relationship with your members.
 - a. Take them out to lunch once in a while.
 - b. Have social gatherings where a sense of community can be established.
- 6) Create a positive environment in the organization.
 - a. Highlight and celebrate success of the organization.

-
- b. When a problem or struggle arises, talk about it and develop an action plan to address the issue.
- 7) Have fun!

"Meet and Feed the Need"

- 1) Find out why members want to be part of your organization.
- 2) Get to know individual members and discover what "gets them going."
- 3) Be prepared and motivated yourself: Energy is contagious.
- 4) Have clearly stated goals and objectives for each project or event.
- 5) Make members feel special and appreciated by:
 - a. Treats (food).
 - b. E-mails.
 - c. Personal notes.
 - d. Verbal kudos at meetings.

Representing the Organization

Once you become a member of a student organization, and even more so when you are an executive board member, you can become “the organization.” In other words, how you look, what you say, how you behave, and basically everything you do reflects on the organization. Like people, student organizations have a reputation. Most student organizations want to be respected and be taken seriously by the college/university administration. Because of this, it is extremely important to look at how you are representing the organization when you interact with college/university officials.

Interacting with College/University Administration

- Always be prepared.
 - Preparation prior to formal meetings is a MUST.
 - Organize your main points in written format.
- Always state whether you are speaking on behalf of yourself or the student organization.
- What do I do if they don’t understand my concerns?
 - Many people, including some administrators, have never thought about disability in a civil rights context.
 - It is your job as an advocate to educate those you interact with.
 - Provide some Disability 101.
- Always stay calm!
 - Think before you speak, try not to say things you may regret later.
 - Take a deep breath.
 - If other members of your organization are also attending the meeting, let them take the floor for a bit.
- Thanks You’s.
 - When a meeting/interaction goes well with an administrator always be sure to thank them.
 - Even when a meeting doesn’t go as positively as you had hoped, it is still good to thank them for their time. This is a way to end the interaction on a positive note. You never know when you might need that administrator’s assistance with a different issue.
 - Thank you’s could be a card, letter, phone call, e-mail, or a simple verbal “thanks” at the end of the conversation.
- The “From Enemy to Ally” Phenomenon
 - Believe it or not the individual you may have initially thought was an “enemy” to the disability community may soon become our “ally” through your interaction with them. For example:

-
- The Student Alumni Foundation (SAF) is responsible for your school mascot. You see the mascot doing something extremely offensive to the disability community. You think SAF is the enemy.
 - A few months later, your organization is working with a coalition of college/university departments on creating a map of campus with accessibility features. You find out SAF is on the coalition. In this case, SAF is the ally.
 - Through this coalition, SAF begins to understand issues surrounding the disability community. They now realize the offensiveness of the mascot incident that occurred earlier and decide to address the issue.
- Let's work together on this issue.
 - Try to emphasize that the student organization plans to work with administration to alleviate the issue which is being addressed.
 - Try to make statements such as "we have to . . ." instead of "you have to . . ."
 - Strength in numbers.
 - Make it clear that you are a representative from a student organization and/or a coalition. This gives them the idea that other members are also in agreement.
 - Be Flexible.
 - You won't always get EXACTLY what you want, but be open-minded if an alternative is offered that is agreed upon. Sometimes you have to take small steps. Eventually, the small steps will lead to large change.
 - Try to find a happy medium, but don't compromise your organization's stance.
 - Effective Communication.
 - Refer to the document Effective Communication section of this handbook.

Keeping Records

People often think of record keeping as more work for the organization. But in actuality, it creates less work for the organization. Keeping records can give members something to refer back to later down the road. For example, advocating for a certain issue on campus can take a long time. Keeping documentation of what was done, when it was done, and with whom it was done, can help members see (and remember) what has already been done and what still needs to be done.

Keeping records can also play a huge role in transitioning leadership. Many disability student organizations face an ongoing problem – leaders of the organization graduate and nobody is there to carry on the group. Then a few years later, new students come along and start the group up again. Leaving behind records for the new students can be beneficial for several reasons. First, it gives them an idea of what the nature and purpose of the group is/was. Second, it informs them of the issues the group previously worked on, allowing the group to pick up where it left off instead of reinventing the wheel. Lastly, it saves the new members a lot of time. Instead of spending a year re-establishing the group, creating a constitution, etc., the group can jump right into becoming active.

What to Keep a Record of?

It is up to each student organization what they want to keep records of. Some of the most useful and most common records include:

- **Meeting Agendas:** Keeping a record of what was discussed at each meeting. This allows members to follow the key issues over the years of the organization's existence.
- **Meeting Minutes:** Keeping a record of what was said at each meeting. This is more detail than the agenda itself. Minutes may also include how long the meeting lasted, who was present, and other details that may serve as a resource down the road.
- **Organizational Information:** This may include the office phone number, a code for the copying machine, financial account information, and other information that is essential to the operation of the organization.
- **Log of Contacts:** A list of college/university administration and other influential community members, their contact information, and notes of who was contacted when and why. You may also include personal notes about whether they are an ally, were they receptive to your concerns, and other information that may describe the organization's relationship with that person.
- **Constitution and By-Laws:** Store a copy of the constitution and of all additions, deletions, and changes that take place.

- **Executive Board Responsibilities:** You may want to create a binder for each position that describes that person's responsibilities as a board member. You may also elect to make a binder for your organization's advisor as well.
- **Event Planning:** A list of events the organization has put on and all materials involved in planning the event. This can help when the organization decides to duplicate an event – they know the process and can use the same flyer, budget, etc.
- **Meeting Log:** A list of meetings members of the organization have attended, what the topic was, who was present, and the outcome of the meeting. This can be a very useful tool for referring back to previous meetings. For example, if you are having a second meeting with the same college/university official, you can easily refer to what happened at the previous meeting. It can also help new executive board members know who met with who about what issues to avoid duplicate advocacy efforts.
- **Budget:** A tracking system of the funding of the organization. This way, the members can know how much money the organization has at any given time. It is also beneficial to track how much money is needed for events, office supplies, publicity, etc.
- **Annual Report:** A detailed report of the organization's accomplishments during the school year. This may also include challenges the organization faced and goals for the upcoming year.
- **Publicity:** Keeping a copy of all of the publicity materials used by the organization (flyers, press releases, etc.) can help with saving time in recreating such items for future events and recruitment procedures. It is also helpful to save all newspaper articles about the organization so that future members can see the previous activities and successes of the organization.
- **How To's:** Putting together a binder or folder of essential organizational operations can also help when new executive board members begin their terms. Information included in this binder may include how to plan an event, how to reserve university facilities, how to obtain funding, how to complete a performance contract, etc.
- **Log of Office Hours:** Some organizations require executive board members to hold office hours. If this is the case for your organization, having a log book for members to complete listing when they undergo office hours can serve as a tracking system to ensure executive board members are carrying out their duties.
- **Resources:** Some organizations keep track of resources they may provide for students with disabilities such as scholarship opportunities, employment information, disability legislation, or other important disability information.

Leadership Succession

Along with student organizations comes transition of leadership – executive board members graduate and new members fill those positions. It is very common for student organizations to encounter barriers during this process and sometimes, if there is a lack of students willing to take on the new leadership roles, the organization may even become inactive until a new group of students comes along to restart the organization.

Watch out for a workbook on Leadership Succession that CONNECT will be publishing in the near future.

In order to help your student organization thrive from year to year, it is essential to adequately transition the incoming executive board members. The new officers need to be fully briefed on the operations of your student organization, the college/university's Student Life Department, and the policies of the college/university. If there are no new incoming officers, it is essential to leave important information behind for the new students to pick up months or years down the road.

The following suggestions can help maintain membership and minimize the barriers during leadership succession:

- **Annual Report:** Each outgoing officer should draft an annual report describing the accomplishments of the office, any challenges the officer faced and future goals for the office. This should be given to the new officers early in the transition process.
- **Officer Meetings:** Each outgoing officer should meet at least once with their corresponding incoming officer. The old officer should go over the responsibilities of his/her position with the incoming officer.
- **Exchange Files:** Each outgoing officer should exchange any files relevant to the office with the new officer. Make sure to go over the filing system and point out any forms that may need to be filled out by the new officer.
- **Ice Breakers:** The new officers should meet together to introduce themselves and get to know one another. It is helpful to have the outgoing officers present at this time to help facilitate this process.
- **Joint Board Meeting:** Both the outgoing and incoming officers should hold a board meeting together. During this meeting, the old officers can give the new officers pointers on how to run the meeting, vote, etc.
- **Officer Review:** Outgoing officers should meet once more with their corresponding incoming officers to review any questions the new officers might have after the board meeting.
- **Advisor Meeting:** The new officers should meet together with the organization's advisor as early in the transition process as possible. They should introduce themselves and decide together what expectations the organization and advisor have of each other.

-
- **Goal Setting:** The new officers and advisor should work together to generate goals for each office as well as goals for the executive board and student organization as a whole.
 - **Change of Contact:** Contact information for the new officers should be given to the organization's advisor, Student Life Department, Disability Services Office, and other college/university administrators whom the organization has frequent contacts/relationships with.
 - **Budget:** New officers should meet with the outgoing treasurer (or whomever manages the organization's funding) to learn about the funding process. If possible new officers should witness the process of applying for funding early in the transition period.
 - **Transition:** The new officers should contact the Student Life Department to learn about important upcoming dates that the organization will benefit from knowing; such as renewing registration, the Welcome Week Fair, budget deadlines, etc.

Group Advisor

As previously mentioned, many colleges/universities require student organizations to have an advisor. Advisors can be a great resource for the student organization, especially when it comes to college/university policies and financial concerns.

Who Can Be an Advisor?

Each college/university has its own regulations regarding who can be an advisor. It is common that the advisor must be a college/university faculty member, staff member, or graduate student. *Check with your Student Life Department about the advisor requirements for your college/university.*

Roles of Advisors

The roles of an advisor vary depending on the college/university requirements as well as the wants and needs of the student organization. Some of the more universal roles include:

- Assist officers in understanding their duties, administering programs and plans, organizing projects and making appropriate transitions.
- See that continuity of the organization is preserved through a constitution, minutes, files, and traditions.
- Serve as a resource to introduce new ideas and perspectives and offer different approaches.
- Encourage students to understand and apply democratic principles, including recognition of minority opinions and rights.
- Attend organization meetings and events.
- Articulate campus policies and procedures and help cut through the red tape when necessary.
- Point out additional resources within the campus and the outside community.
- Be a sounding board, especially for officers, and be supportive of all members.
- Provide continuity as the turnover of officers and members continues throughout the years.
- Be a facilitator both among officers and between officers and members, when needed.
- Be familiar with national structure and services, if relevant.

-
- Be a resource for the students especially in regard to understanding University policies, regulations and services.
 - Consult on programs, when necessary.
 - Consult with individual students, when necessary.

Student Organization's Roles to the Advisor

As advisors have roles to the organization, the organization also has roles to the advisor. The student organization/advisor relationship is a two-way street. Some of the most common roles of student organizations include:

- Notify the advisor of all meetings and events.
- Consult him/her in the planning of projects and events.
- Consult him/her if the organization is making any changes in the structure of the group, or in the policies of the organization are made, and before major projects are undertaken.
- Remember you can talk over any concerns or issues with your advisor.
- Be clear and open about your expectations for your advisor's role.
- Periodically evaluate your advisor and give feedback.

Formal Agreements

It is often beneficial (and sometimes required by the college/university) for advisors to sign an agreement of acknowledgement and understanding of their responsibilities. The following is an example of the agreement form. *Check with your Student Life Department to see if your college/university has a form.*

Advisor Agreement (Sample Form)¹¹

I agree to be the advisor of the _____ organization and I have received copies of the College/University's regulations contained in the student handbook and have read the advisor's section of the Student Organizations' Handbook. I recognize that the duties of an advisor should include maintaining regular contact with the officers; upholding the College/University's mission, policies, and regulations; being familiar with the activities of the organization; and providing assistance in the administration of the financial affairs of the organization.	
Note: Advisors are not allowed to hold office or vote.	
Name:	Date:
University Department:	Title:
Address:	Telephone:
Signature:	

Selecting an Advisor

For some, selecting an advisor can be a difficult process while for others the organization may already have someone in mind, making the decision easy. Whatever the case, there is a lot to take into consideration. Here are some things you may want to think about when deciding on a group advisor:

- Does this person fit the requirements of the college/university?
- Does this person believe in the purpose and mission of the organization?
- Does this person have the time it takes to be a dedicated advisor?
- Does this person get along well with the group members?
- Is this person knowledgeable of the college/university's policies and procedures?
- Does this person have any previous experience as an advisor?
- Will this person try to take control of the group or let the group have control?
- Does this person have an understanding of the issues facing the disability community?
- If your organization is an advocacy organization, does this person have advocacy experience and will they support the type of advocacy your organization seeks to accomplish?
- Will this person provide good peer support?
- How long is the person willing to serve as the advisor?

¹¹ Department of Student Life (2007). *Michigan State University*. Retrieved on January 12, 2007 from http://www.studentlife.msu.edu/current_students/rso/documents/advisors.pdf.

It is up to the organization about the process of selecting an advisor. Some organizations may choose to have an interview process as if applying for employment. Some organizations may let the executive board make the decision while other organizations may allow the members to vote. Another option is to set up a committee to make a recommendation or decision. Whatever method you choose, it is important to have input from several individuals.

Once the advisor is selected, be sure to set up a meeting to clearly discuss the roles and responsibilities of both the advisor and the student organization. Discuss in depth what the relationship will look like between the advisor and organizations. Talk about the expectations you have of one another. The clearer this information is in the beginning, the less likely conflict is to arise down the road.

Assertive Communication

When advocating for change within a college/university or community, how you articulate your message can either make or break your case. For example, if you are passively asking for something, come across as shy and timid, and accept the first answer you receive, it is quite possible that your advocacy efforts will be unsuccessful. On the other hand, if you are more assertive, come across as someone who knows what they are talking about, and have a strong case, your advocacy efforts are more likely to be successful. It is important to note that there is a fine line between being assertive and being aggressive. This section will give an overview of assertive communication and how you can use it to your advantage.

Introduction

Do you have trouble saying no, even when you really should? Do you feel like people walk all over you? Do you have trouble keeping your temper under control? If you answered yes to any of these questions, assertive communication may be a helpful skill for you.

Assertive Communication¹²

Assertiveness is not aggressiveness. Human behavior is a continuum of “passive,” “assertive,” and “aggressive.”

Passive<----->Assertive<----->Aggressive

Assertive communication can be defined as the appropriate and honest expression of our views or feelings to another person, while respecting that person. It is the ability to honestly express your opinions, feelings, attitudes, and rights, without undue anxiety, in a way that doesn't infringe on the rights of others. Oftentimes people are not assertive because of fear of hurting another person's feelings, and perhaps risking rejection by that person. Many of us are taught that we should always please and/or defer to others, that it is not nice to consider our own needs above those of others, or that we shouldn't "make waves", that if someone says or does something that we don't like, we should just be quiet and try to stay away from that person in the future. Relying on what we think others think of us for our self-worth makes it hard to be assertive. It is dependent on a feeling of self-efficacy, a sense that if you behave in a certain way, something predictable will occur. If we don't practice assertiveness skills we may eventually feel we are unable to be assertive. As a result, our self-worth may dwindle, leaving us feeling uncertain about tackling even the smallest challenge.

¹² Barnette, V. “Assertive Communication,” *University of Iowa*.

How to Begin Communication Assertively

Using “I” language is a great way to begin communicating assertively. “I” statements help you take ownership of the issue and can help make people less defensive. When we have a reaction to something another person says or does, we should let that person know how we are affected, using “I” phrases. For example, if your roommate borrows your basketball and doesn't return it I state, "I feel pretty angry that you forgot and left the gym without my basketball. I would appreciate your buying me another one." For the same reasons, “I” language is also beneficial when advocating. “I” language is one way of putting a personal face to the situation at hand. For example, if you are advocating for a ramp to be built on a shopping center, you can say, “I feel that the lack of a ramp is preventing several people with disabilities from accessing your store and purchasing items. The message I got from the lack of access is that people with disabilities are not welcome and I think it would benefit both people with disabilities and your shopping center if a ramp was built.”

Steps to Being Assertive

- *Empathy/Validation:* Try to say something that shows your understanding of the other person's feelings. This shows them that you're not trying to pick a fight, and it takes the wind out of their sails.
 - Ex: "I know that you get anxious when you're all ready to go and I'm not ..."
- *Statement of Problem:* Describes your dissatisfaction and why you need something to change.
 - Ex: "... but when you do that, I get all flustered and take even more time. By the time we get in the car, we're mad at each other and not much in the mood to have a good time."
- *Statement of What You Want:* This is a specific request for a specific change.
 - Ex: "From now on, let's be sure we know what time we want to leave, and if you're ready before I am, will you please just go to another room and read the paper or watch TV?"

How to Be Effectively Assertive

- *Use assertive body language.* Face the other person, stand or sit straight, don't use dismissive gestures, be sure you have a pleasant, but serious facial expression, keep your voice calm and soft, not whiney or abrasive.
- *Use "I" statements.* Keep the focus on the problem you're having, not on accusing or blaming the other person. Example: "I'd like to be able to tell my stories without interruption." instead of "You're always interrupting my stories!"
- *Use facts, not judgments.* Example: "Your punctuation needs work and your formatting is inconsistent" instead of "This is sloppy work." or "Did you know that

shirt has some spots?" instead of "You're not going out looking like THAT, are you?"

- *Express ownership of your thoughts, feeling, and opinions.* Example: "I get angry when he breaks his promises." instead of "He makes me angry." or "I believe the best policy is to..." instead of "The only sensible thing is to ..."
- *Make clear, direct, requests.* Don't invite the person to say no. Example: "Will you please ... ?" instead of "Would you mind ... ?" or "Why don't you ... ?"

Special Techniques for Difficult Situation:

- *Broken Record:* Keep repeating your point, using a low level, pleasant voice. Don't get pulled into arguing or trying to explain yourself. This lets you ignore manipulation, baiting, and irrelevant logic. Example: You are taking something back to a store that you know gives refunds, but the clerk first questions your decision, tries to imply that there's something wrong with you because you changed your mind, tells you that she can only give a store credit, etc. Using the *broken record*, you walk into the store and say "I decided I don't need this and I'd like my money back." Then no matter what the clerk says, you keep repeating "I decided I don't need this and I'd like my money back." If she doesn't get it, simply ask to speak to a manager and say the same thing. Trust me, it works!
- *Fogging:* This is a way to deflect negative, manipulative criticism. You agree with some of the fact, but retain the right to choose your behavior. Example: *Mom:* "Your skirt is awfully short, don't you think you should wear longer skirts? They're the style now." *You:* "You're right, skirts are longer now." Agree with as much of the facts as you want to, but don't agree to change your skirt length. *Fogging* is great for avoiding fights and making people stop criticizing. With significant others, when you need to keep living together, it's best to quietly hear them out, then assertively give your response.
- *Content to Process Shift:* This means that you stop talking about the problem and bring up, instead, how the other person is behaving RIGHT NOW. Use it when someone's not listening or trying to use humor or a distraction to avoid the issue. Example: "You're getting off the point. I'm starting to feel frustrated because I feel like you're not listening."
- *Defusing:* Letting someone cool down before discussing an issue. Example: "I can see that you're upset, and I can even understand part of your reaction. Let's talk about this later." Also, if they try to stay with it, you always have the right to walk away.
- *Assertive Inquiry/Stop Action:* This is similar to the content to process shift. "Let's hold it for a minute, something isn't working, what just happened? How did we get into this argument?" This helps to identify the real issue when the argument is actually about something bigger than the immediate topic. Example:
 - Person 1: "Can you help me with this statistics problem?"

- Person 2: "Man, will you just get off my back? You know how much I have to do today!"
- Person 1: "Why is it such a problem to take 15 minutes to help me with this? You told me last night that you would!"
- Person 2: "I get so tired of you always asking me to do these things right when I'm in the middle of something!"
- Person 1: "Whoa, let's take a break here. How did we get from my stats problem to you being tired of my interruptions?"
- The real problem is not the stats problem, it's timing. Now that topic is open for discussion and they're becoming aware of how their arguments escalate.
- *Summarization*: This helps to make sure you're understanding the other person. Example: "So what you're trying to tell me is"
- *Specificity*: It's really important to be very clear about what you want done. This helps prevent distractions. Example: "The thing I really wish is that you'd pick your clothes up off the floor."

A Note About Selective Assertiveness

Most people find it easier to be assertive in some situations than in others. This makes perfect sense. It's a lot easier to hold your ground with a stranger than with someone you love who might get angry if you express your true feelings. But the more important the relationship is to you, the more important it is to be assertive. Assertive behaviors lead to increased respect from others, their willingness to see you as a person who respects him/herself, a *worthwhile* person, a more loveable person!

Is Assertiveness Always the Best Way to Go?

Before you decide to act assertively in a given situation, you have to decide if you can live with the consequences. Although assertive behavior usually will result in a positive response, some people might react negatively to it. For example, if your boss is completely unreasonable and is known to go ballistic if anyone dares question his orders, even non-aggressive, respectful, assertive behavior might set him off and you could lose your job. If that's your situation, then you may decide you can't afford to be assertive, and learn other stress management techniques.

Setting the stage: If you're planning to try assertive behavior, remember that the other person is used to your behaving in a certain way, and may be thrown for a loop or thoroughly confused when you change your communication style. Why not tell the other person up front what you're trying to do? It helps to choose a peaceful moment for this. Then you might say something like

"I need to tell you something and I'd like you to hear me out before you comment. I've noticed lately that after we've been working on a project together, I find

myself feeling frustrated and overwhelmed. I've been thinking about it and I've realized that I often go along with your ideas, without insisting on considering some of my ideas as well, because I'm afraid of upsetting you. From now on I'm going to try something different. When I start to get those frustrated feelings, I'm going to ask that we stop before making a final decision and be sure we have considered all the options. I know that will be a change for you, but I really think it's fair and I know I'll do a better job and feel better about myself if I can tell you about my ideas."

Not Using Assertive Communication May Result In

- 1) A sense of being helpless, hopeless, with no control over your life. This is often due to anger focused inward.
- 2) Resentment and anger at others for manipulating or taking advantage of you.
- 3) Frustration.
- 4) An inability to express anger appropriately causes it to build up until it blows.
- 5) Anxiety and avoidance. If you begin to avoid situations or people that you know will make you uncomfortable, you may miss out on fun activities, job opportunities, relationships, etc.
- 6) Inability to express emotions (negative or positive). It can be detrimental for a relationship when the partners cannot express to one another what they want and need and how the other person affects them.
- 7) Physical complaints of headaches, ulcers, high blood pressure, etc. Stress affects our bodies, and assertiveness, when it becomes a habit, is a great stress reliever.

Some Final Points

One of the most common problems in communications is caused by trying to read people's minds or expecting them to read yours. If you want people to respond to your ideas and needs, you have to be able to say what they are, and say it in a way that will make others want to respond nicely. Do you remember the self-efficacy part from the beginning of this piece? The belief that if you do something in a particular way, you will be effective? Even if you don't believe that now, but you muster your courage and try some of these techniques in situations that are not hugely threatening, the results will probably be so encouraging that you will begin to believe in your effectiveness. If it's really scary to think about being assertive, try it first with people you don't know. Think of someone you know who is assertive and pretend you are that person. Once you become comfortable with assertive behaviors in less threatening situations, you can crank it up a notch and use it all the time. When assertiveness becomes a habit, you will wonder how you ever got along before you started using it. The nicest thing about all of this is that after you've become truly assertive, you probably won't need to use these techniques very much. As people practice assertive communication, you can almost see that little spark of self-respect glimmer, flicker, take hold, and burst into

flame. People can sense it when you respect yourself, and they will treat you with respect. And that is the ultimate goal of assertive communication.

Resources on Assertiveness

Alberti, Robert E., and Emmons, Michael. *Your Perfect Right*. Revised edition. San Luis Obispo, CA: IMPACT, 1990.

Bower, Sharon, and Bower, Gordon. *Asserting Yourself*. Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1976.

Bramson, Robert M. *Coping with Difficult People*. New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1981

Butler, Pamela. *Self-assertion for Women*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1981.

Smith, Manual J. *When I Say No, I Feel Guilty*. New York: The Dial Press, 1975.

Conflict Resolution

Whenever you have a group of people together, conflict is inevitable. It is impossible for 100% of the people to agree 100% of the time. This is true for student organizations as well. Group members may disagree about issues, strategies, events, agenda items, the name of the organization, the constitution and by-laws, meeting times and locations, or even something as simple as the color of a flyer. This information is not meant to scare you off, but rather to prepare you for the realities of a student organization. Conflict will happen whether you like it or not. So, here are a few tools to deal with the conflict when it arises.

There are several ways to handle conflict and it all depends on the situation as to which method you may choose. Some possible ways to resolve conflict include:

- Talking it out
- Taking a vote
- Using mediation services (some colleges/universities provide this service free of charge)
- Calling a meeting with the advisor
- Compromise/Find a middle ground

Asking for Behavior Change¹³

When the conflict revolves around someone's specific behavior, requesting a change in that particular behavior can often resolve the issue. For example: You may need to ask a roommate to turn down the stereo so you can study. It is necessary to request that others change behavior that does not work, but it is often difficult for people to make such requests:

1. You have a right to ask for behavior change from others. (They also have the right to refuse).
2. When you do not ask others to change a problem behavior, you risk allowing the behavior to continue and your relationship to be strained, or waiting until you are "fed up" and starting a fight.
3. Requests for behavior change protect your rights, at the same time they build clear communication and more effective relationships.
4. When asking for behavior change, use an "I message" format:

¹³ University of Wisconsin Counseling Service

WHEN ... (objectively describe the other's behavior)

THE EFFECTS ARE ... (describe how the behavior concretely affects you).

I FEEL ... (describe how you feel).

I'D PREFER ... (describe an alternate behavior you prefer).

OK? ... (or synonymous request for closure).

You may wish to follow requests for behavior change with statements of logical consequences ("If you turn down the radio when I need to study, I will also make an effort to be considerate of your needs").

5. Demonstrate assertive body language when asking for behavior change: direct eye contact, erect posture, and clear speech.

Burnout

Being part of a student organization can have the potential for burnout – especially if the student organization is advocacy focused. Maintaining and operating the organization can consume a lot of one’s time and energy. It is no simple task that’s for sure. Encountering barriers with recruitment, publicity, advocacy, or any other issue can be discouraging. At times, it feels like you are putting forth so much effort and not getting anything in return. You may feel like you don’t see the immediate effects of your advocacy efforts. There is a mixture of feelings a student organization member may feel during their time with the organization that can lead to a feeling of burnout. In order to keep going through these feelings and avoid burnout, it is important to take care of one’s self.

Stop the Burnout! Stay in contact with other CONNECT groups and support each other. Attend a CONNECT retreat or one of the other networking events sent out in the CONNECT E-Zine.

What is Burnout?

Burnout is a term often used to describe a series of feelings all relating to being exhausted of the work you are currently doing. These feelings can include:

- When you feel like you’ve had it and are ready to throw in the towel.
- When you experience a lack of energy, motivation, or drive.
- When you feel overwhelmed.
- When you feel a sense of powerlessness.

Powerful vs. Powerless

When involved with an advocacy student organization, you may feel powerful at times and powerless at other times. You will find that you fluctuate between the two depending on the situation and current environment of the student organization.

- *Powerful* – Feeling of control, power, and motivation. Feeling like you can make a difference and create positive change. Feeling like your voice matters. This feeling is often evoked by successes or being part of a larger community united for a common cause.
- *Powerless* – Not feeling powerful or influential. Feeling like your voice does not matter. This feeling is often evoked by oppression and stigma.

During times of feeling powerlessness, you are prone to burnout. You may also feel strong feelings of grief and/or anger. These are very strong emotions and it is

important to recognize these emotions within yourself. It is even more important to work with these emotions in a positive manner.

Coping Mechanisms

There are several coping mechanisms and ways that you can take care of yourself to avoid burnout. Such methods may include:

- Support networks such as friends, family, partners, significant others, co-workers, other student organization members/student leaders, mentors, etc.
- Spirituality, which takes a different form for every individual.
- Meditation.
- Surrounding yourself with other members of the disability community, drawing from their energy to rejuvenate yourself.
- Counseling/Therapy.
- The arts such as music, poetry, journaling, books, etc.
- Taking some time out for YOU to do whatever you love to do (that isn't activism or related to the student organization).

Remember: You are not in this alone! You are a leader and you are involved in influential work that will further the rights of people with disabilities. The path you have chosen is very respectable, dignified, and influential.

CONNECT

The CONNECT (College Organizations Networking Now Each Creating Ties) project networks students with disabilities who are active on campuses, student groups for people with disabilities, disability services offices, and disability community resources. CONNECT assists colleges and universities across the state of Michigan to be more effective in providing support and opportunities for students with disabilities. CONNECT is part of a leadership program called Connections for Community Leadership and is funded by the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council.

CONNECT Activities

Retreats

CONNECT organizes retreats for college students with disabilities. Some retreats are for leaders of student disability groups across the state to help them learn how to network, sustain their organizations, and develop a transition plan for when members graduate. Others are for students who are interested in starting a student disability organization on their campus.

E-zine

CONNECT creates and distributes a monthly electronic newsletter to keep students with disabilities informed about leadership, scholarship, and employment opportunities. To receive this E-zine, send an email to connect@prosynergy.org with "subscribe" in the subject line.

Influencing Organizations

CONNECT works with nationally recognized organizations and corporations, like Monster.com, to assist them in welcoming and including people with disabilities in their leadership programs.

Creating Connections

CONNECT supporting student leaders with disabilities by creating connections and building relationships between students with disabilities, student organizations, disability services offices, and community resources. Strengthening these relationships benefits college campuses with additional supports for their students with disabilities. They also benefit student leaders with disabilities by connecting them to each other, the CONNECT network, and CONNECT resources.

What CONNECT Can Do for You

CONNECT can assist with:

- Communicating with other student groups throughout Michigan.
- Providing support to students with disabilities so they can be more effective in their community.
- Strengthening activities and accomplishments of disability student organizations.
- Creating a transition plan for disability student organizations.
- Distributing information on the latest national and local scholarship, employment, and leadership opportunities to students with disabilities.

Contact Information

CONNECT
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 E. Lake Lansing Rd., Suite 100
East Lansing, MI 48823

Toll Free: (866)-532-2669
Fax: (517) 333-2677
connect@prosynergy.org
<http://www.copower.org/leader/college.html>

Community and Campus Resources

There are several resources on campus and in the community that your organization can turn to for information about student organization or disability issues. Here are just a few of the many resources available:

On Campus Resources

Disability Services Offices

As previously mentioned, many colleges/universities have a specific office that assist people with disabilities throughout their time on campus. These offices will most likely be informed on issues relating to disability. They may also be able to provide support for the student organization by helping with recruitment, getting materials in alternative formats, finding an advisor, advocacy efforts, and/or social support.

Department of Student Life

Many colleges/universities also have a Department of Student Life (may also be called Department of Student Affairs, Department of Student Life, or Department of Student Activities). Student organizations are often required to register with these departments. They can usually provide information specific to student organizations such as event planning, writing the constitution, advisor requirements, etc.

Other Groups

Other student organizations can also serve as a resource. They may be willing to let you model your constitution after theirs, connect you with key administrators, teach you the ropes of event planning, and much more.

Disability Resources in the Community

Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living (CIL's) are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, private, nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within local communities by individuals with disabilities. Centers provide an array of independent living services and vary from organization to organization. CIL's have a wealth of knowledge regarding issues that face the disability community. Some CIL's may also be willing will to provide meeting space and help with recruitment. We have included a list of CIL's throughout Michigan on page 82.

Arc Michigan

The Arc Michigan exists to empower local chapters of The Arc to assure that citizens with developmental disabilities are valued and that they and their families can participate fully in and contribute to the life of their community. The Arc Michigan can also serve as a resource for learning about issues surrounding the disability community. We have included a list of local Arc Chapters on page 83.

Regional Interagency Coordinating Committees

Regional Interagency Coordinating Committees (RICC's) are local groups supported by the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council). They serve as local forums about their areas' issues for people with developmental disabilities (DD). They also give the DD Council input on local needs. At least 51% of a RICC's members are people with DD or family members. RICCs have no paid staff. We have included a list of local RICC's on page 91.

Note: *If you find that any of the following contact information is out of date, please let us know. Also, if you have any additional contacts you feel would be important to list here, please contact us.*

List of Michigan CIL's

ANN ARBOR CIL

2568 Packard Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 971-0277 (Voice)
(734) 971-0310 (TDD)
(734) 971-0826 (FAX)
www.aacil.org

BLUE WATER CIL

310 Water Street
Port Huron, MI 48060
(810) 987-9337 (Voice/TDD)
(810) 987-9548 (FAX)
(800) 527-2167 (Toll Free)
www.bwcil.org

CAPITAL AREA CIL

1048 Pierpont, Suites 9-10
Lansing, MI 48911
(517) 241-0393 (Voice)
(517) 241-0438 (FAX)
www.cacil.org

DN/ MID MICHIGAN

1160 James Savage, Suite C
Midland, MI 48640
(989) 835-4041 (Voice)
(989) 835-8121 (FAX)
www.dnmm.org

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

133 E. Napier
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
(269) 925-6422 (Voice)
(269) 925-7141 (FAX)
www.miconnect.org

DISABILITY ADVOCATES OF KENT COUNTY

3600 Camelot Dr. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
(616) 949-1100 (Voice)
(616) 949-7865 (FAX)
www.disabilityadvocates.us

DISABILITY CONNECTION - MUSKEGON

1871 Peck
Muskegon, MI 49441
(231) 722-0088 (Voice)
(231) 722-0066 (FAX)
<http://www.dcilmi.org>

THE DISABILITY NETWORK

3600 S. Dort Highway, Suite 54
Flint, MI 48507
(810) 742-1800 (Voice)
(810) 742-7647 (TDD)
(810) 742-2400 (FAX)
www.disnetwork.org

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

517 E. Crosstown Parkway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
(269) 345-1516 (Voice)
(269) 345-5925 (TTY)
(269) 345-0229 (FAX)
www.drccil.org

DISABILITY CONNECTIONS

409 Linden Ave.
Jackson, MI 49203
(517) 782-6054 (Voice)
(517) 782-3118 (FAX)
www.disabilityconnect.org

DN/ LAKESHORE

426 Century Lane
Holland, MI 49423
(616) 396-5326 (Voice)
(616) 396-3220 (FAX)
www.dnlakeshore.org

DN/ NORTHERN MICHIGAN

2301 Garfield, Suite A
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 922-0903 (Voice)
(231) 922-2597 (FAX)
www.disabilitynetwork-nmi

DN/ OAKLAND & MACOMB

16645 15 Mile Road
Clinton Township, MI 48035
(586) 268-4160 (Voice)
(800) 248-2457 (TTY)
(586) 268-4720 (FAX)
www.dnom.org

SUPERIOR ALLIANCE FOR IL

129 W. Baraga, Suite H
Marquette, MI 49855
(906) 228-5744 (Voice)
(906) 228-5573 (FAX)
www.upsail.com

DN/ DETROIT/WAYNE

5555 Conner, Ste. 2075
Detroit, MI 48213
313-923-1655 (Voice)
313-923-1404 (FAX)

Local Arc Chapters

ARC/Allegan County

219 Hubbard St.
Allegan, MI 49010
269-673-8841 (Voice)
269-673-1669 (FAX)

Association Macomb/Oakland Regional Center (AMORC)

1378 W. Fairview Ln.
Rochester Hills, MI
48306
248-651-8490 (Voice)

The Arc Arenac Area

PO Box 805
Standish, MI 48658
989-846-6500 ext. 11
(Voice)

The Arc of Bay County

709 Columbus Ave.
Bay City, MI 48708
989-893-1346 (Voice)
989-893-1458 (FAX)
contact@arcbbc.com

Benzie County Arc

11721 Maple Rd.
Beulah, MI 49617
231-882-7246 (Voice)

The Arc of Calhoun

217 W. Hamblin Ave.
Battle Creek, MI 49015
269-966-2575 (Voice)
269-966-2576 (FAX)
arccalhoun@aol.com

ARC/Copper Country

17194 S. River Rd.
Chassell, MI 49916
906-334-2652 (Voice)

Arc Dearborn/Dearborn Heights

27325 W. Warren Ave.
Dearborn Heights, MI
48127
313-562-0219 (Voice)
313-562-0387 (FAX)
arcdpdp@aol.com

The Arc Delta County

PO Box 651
Escanaba, MI 49829
906-786-9212 (Voice)
906-789-6004 (FAX)
lakest@chartermi.net

The Arc Detroit

32317 Ogemaw Ct.
Westland, MI 48186
313-831-0202 (Voice)
313-831-3963 (FAX)
thearcdetroit@aol.com

ARC/Downriver

4212 Thirteenth St.
Wyandotte, MI 48192
734-283-0710 (Voice)
734-283-9018 (FAX)
arcriver@sbcglobal.net
www.arcdownriver.org

ARC/Gogebic Chapter

111 W. Francis St.
Ironwood, MI 49938
906-932-4417 (Voice)

Grosse Pointe/Harper Woods Arc

833 University Pl.
Grosse Pointe City, MI
48230
313-884-3996 (Voice)
www.thearcgphw.org

The ARC of Central Michigan

PO Box 171
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
989-773-8765 (Voice)
989-772-5339 (FAX)
director@arcocentralmi.org
www.geocities.com/arcisabella

Community Advocates for Persons with Developmental

Disabilities Kalamazoo
814 S. Westnedge Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
269-342-9801 (Voice)
269-342-4638 (FAX)
www.communityadvocates.org

The Arc Kent County
1331 Lake Dr. SE Suite
#2
Grand Rapids, MI
49506
616-459-3339 (Voice)
616-459-5299 (FAX)
thearc@iserv.net
www.arckent.org/home.asp

The Arc Livingston County
1004 Pickney Rd. Suite
201
Howell, MI 48843
517-546-1228 (Voice)
517-546-9821 (FAX)

ARC Services of Macomb, Inc.
44050 Gratiot Ave.
Clinton Township, MI
48036
586-469-1600 (Voice)
586-469-2527 (FAX)
www.arcservices.org

ARC/Manistee
481 Bryant Ave.
Manistee, MI 49660
231-723-6205 (Voice)
231-723-1520 (FAX)
www.manistee-isd.k12.mi.us

The Arc of Midland
220 W. Main St. Ste 101
Midland, MI 48640
989-631-4439 (Voice)
989-832-5528 (FAX)

The Arc of Monroe County
752 Monroe Suite B
Monroe, MI 48161
arcmonroe@sbcglobal.net

The Arc Montcalm
PO Box 1011
Stanton, MI 48888
989-831-5725 (Voice)

ARC/Muskegon
1145 E. Wesley Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49442
231-777-2006 (Voice)
231-777-3507 (FAX)
arcmusk@i2k.com

The Arc/Newaygo County
PO Box 147
Fremont, MI 49412
616-459-3339 (Voice)
616-459-5299 (FAX)

The Arc of Northwest Wayne County
26049 Five Mile Rd.
Redford, MI 48239
313-532-7915 (Voice)
313-532-7488 (FAX)
arcnw@aol.com
www.thearc.nw.org

The Arc of Oakland County, Inc.
1641 W. Big Beaver Rd.
Troy, MI 48084
248-816-1900 (Voice)
248-816-1906 (FAX)
tfk@thearcoakland.org
www.thearcoakland.org

ARC/Oceana County
PO Box 121
Shelby, MI 49455
231-861-4329 (Voice)

ARC Advocacy & Resource Center (Ottawa County)
info@arc-resources.org
www.arc-resources.org

Parents & Advocates for Wayne Community Living Services (Plymouth)
28623 W. Chicago
Livonia, MI 48150
313-266-2105 (Voice)

ARC/Sanilac
PO Box 805
Standish, MI 48658
810-648-3340 (Voice)

The Arc Shiawassee
1905 W. M-21
Owosso, MI 48867
989-723-7377 (Voice)
989-725-6113 (FAX)
arcchia@michonline.net
www.arcofshiawassee.org

The Arc of St. Clair County
1033 26th St.
Port Huron, MI 48060
810-982-3261 (Voice)
810-982-2225 (FAX)
arcsccl@advnet.net

Tri-County Community Advocates

921 N. Washington Ave.
Lansing, MI 48906
517-484-3068 (Voice)
517-484-7035 (FAX)

Van Buren ARC

50563 M-43
Bangor, MI 49103
269-427-5056 (Voice)
269-427-5056 (FAX)

Washtenaw Association for Community Advocacy

1100 N. Main St. #205
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-662-1256 (Voice)
734-662-2699 (FAX)

The Arc of Western Wayne County

2257 S. Wayne Rd.
Westland, MI 48186
734-729-9100 (Voice)
734-729-9695 (FAX)
www.thearcww.org

2006 RICC List

Alger-Marquette

129 West Baraga, Suite H
Marquette, MI 49855
Phone: 906-228-5744
Fax: 906-228-5573

Allegan

Allegan CMH; 277 North St.
Allegan, MI 49010
Phone: 269-686-4668
Fax: 269-686-4601

Alpena

NEMCMHS; 400 Johnson St
Alpena, MI 49707
Ph. 989.356.2161 ext. 260
Fax 989.354.5898

Antrim-Kalkaska

Antrim-Kalkaska CMH
P. O. Box 220
Bellaire, MI 49615
Phone: 231-533-8619
Fax: 231-533-6973

Arenac

The Arc Arenac, PO Box 805
Standish, MI 48658
Phone: 989-846-6500 ext 11
Fax: 989-846-0431

Baraga

Copper Country CMH
HC 03, Box 957
L'Anse, MI 49946
Phone: 906-524-5885
Fax: 906-524-5866

Bay

201 Mulholland
Bay City, MI 48708
Phone: 989-895-2212
Fax: 989-895-2390

Benzie

6051 Frankfort Hwy, Ste 300
Benzonia, MI 49616
Phone: 231-352-5052
Fax: 231-352-8003

Berrien

133 E. Napier Ave. Ste 2
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: 269-925-6422
Fax: 269-925-7141

Calhoun

Disability Resource Center of
Southwestern MI
3 Laura Lane
Battle Creek, MI 49017
Phone: (269) 696-7740
Fax: 269.969.6218

Capital Area

Capital Area CIL
1048 Pierpont, Suites 9 &10
Lansing, MI 48911
Phone: 517-241-0399
Fax: 517-241-0438

Cass

133 E Napier Ave. Ste.2
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Phone: 269-925-6422
Fax: 269-925-7141

Central Michigan

301 S. Crapo, Ste 300
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
Ph: 989-772-5938 x 1262
Fax: 989-773-1968

Cheboygan

800 Livingston Blvd., B-2
Gaylord, MI 48735
Phone: 989-732-6295
Fax: 989-732-0780

Clinton

Capital Area CIL
1048 Pierpont, Ste 9-10
Lansing, MI 48911
Phone: 517-241-0401
Fax: 517-241-0438

Copper Country

Vocational Strategies, Inc.
23390 Airpark Blvd.
Calumet, MI 49913
Phone: 906-482-6142
Fax: 906-482-6133

Delta

Pathways
2820 College Ave.
Escanaba, MI 49829
Phone: 906-786-6411
Fax: 906-786-5859

Eastern UP

3865 S. Mackinaw Trail
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783
Phone: 906-635-3745

Eaton

CACIL
1048 Pierpont, Ste 9-10
Lansing, MI 48911
Phone: 517-335-1224
Fax: 517-241-0438

Genesee

The Disability Network
3600 S. Dort Highway, Ste 54
Flint, MI 48507
Phone: 810-742-1800
Fax: 810-742-2400

Grand Traverse

NMAIL
2301 Garfield Ste A
Traverse City, MI 49686
Phone: 231-922-0903 x 11
Fax: 231-922-2597

Huron

1108 S. Van Dyke
Bad Axe, MI 48413
Phone: 989-269-2962
Fax: 989-269-3891

Iosco

Ausauble Valley CMH
1199 Harris Ave.
Tawas City, MI 48764
Phone: 989-739-1469
Fax: 989-739-9901

Jackson

disAbility Connections
409 Linden Street
Jackson, MI 49203
Phone: 517-782-6054
Fax: 517-782-3118

Kalamazoo

Disability Resource Center
CIL
517 East Crosstown Parkway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
Phone: 269-345-1516 ext.35
Fax: 269-345-0229

Kent

Disability Advocates
3600 Camelot SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
Phone: 616-949-1100 x 226
Fax: 616-949-7865

Lapeer

Blue Water CIL
392 West Nepessing Street
Lapeer, MI 48446
Phone: 810-664-9098
Fax: 810-664-0937

Lenawee

MDCD - Rehab Services
1040 South Winter, Ste 3017
Adrian, MI 49221
Phone: 517-263-0607
Fax: 517-263-8655

Livingston

1004 Pinckney Rd, Ste 201
Howell, MI 48843
Phone: 517-546-1228
Fax: 517-546-9821

Luce

Pathways
200 Hamilton Lake Road
P. O. Box 448
Newberry, MI 49868
Phone: 906-293-3284
Fax: 906-293-3850

Macomb

Creative Employment
Opportunities
308 North Gratiot
Mount Clemens, MI 48043
Phone: 586-493-9715
Fax: 586-493-9717
ddadvocate@atnmail.com

Mason

920 Diana St
Ludington, MI 49431
Phone: 231-845-6294
Fax: 891-845-7095

Midland

Arnold Center
400 Wexford
Midland, MI 48640
Phone: 989-631-9570
Fax: 989-631-9316

Monroe

The Arc of Monroe County
752 S. Monroe Street, Suite B
Monroe, MI 48161
Phone: 734-241-5881
Fax: 734-241-3694
arcmonroe@sbcglobal.net

Muskegon

Goodwill Industries
271 Apple Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49442
Phone: 231-722-7871
Fax: 231-728-6408

Newaygo

NCMN, PO Box 867
White Cloud, MI 49349
Phone: 231-689-7330
Fax: 231-689-7345

Northern Area

North Country CMH
800 Livingston Blvd, Ste 2B
Gaylord, MI 49735
Phone: 989-732-6294 ext
3613
Fax: 989-732-0780

Oakland

OCCMHA
2011 Executive Hills Blvd.
Auburn Hills, MI 48326
Phone: 248-858-9160

Ogemaw

511 Griffin Rd.
West Branch, MI 48611
Phone: 989-345-5540

Ontonagon

421 Minnesota Ave.
Ontonagon, MI 49953
Phone: (906) 884-4808
Fax: 906-884-4856

Ottawa

Arc Advocacy & Resource
Center
665/136 Ave., Suite 90
Holland, MI 49424
Ph: 616.738.8570
Fax: 616.738.9340
info@arc-resources.org

Saginaw

919 Veterans Memorial
Parkway
Saginaw, MI 48604
Phone: 989-752-6176 ext.
136
Fax: 989-752-3111

Saint Clair

Blue Water Housing
Development, Inc.
1600 Gratiot, Bldg. A
Marysville, MI 48040
Phone: 810-388-1200
Fax: 810-388-0722

Sanilac

Blue Water CIL
103 E. Sanilac, Ste 3
Sandusky, MI 48471
Phone: 810-648-2555

Shiawassee

The ARC Shiawassee.
1905 West M-21
Owosso, MI 48867
Phone: 989-723-7377
Fax: 989-725-6113
arcshia@michonline.net

Tuscola

1184 Cleaver Rd.
Carol, MI 48723
Phone: 989-673-3678
Fax: 989-673-3678
bwcil@centurytel.net

Van Buren

PO Box 177
Bangor, MI 49013
Phone: 269-427-5625
Fax: 269-427-8618

Washtenaw

Washtenaw ACA
1100 North Main, Suite 205
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Phone: 734-662-1256
Fax: 734-662-2699

Wayne

Arc Detroit
51 W. Hancock
Detroit, MI 48201
Phone: 313-831-0202
Fax: 313-831-3693
thearcdetroit@aol.com



Disability Resources

Books

Brown, S (2003) Movie Stars and Sensuous Scars: Essays on the Journey From Disability Shame to Disability Pride. People with Disabilities Press.

Hartling, L., Rosen, W. Walker, M. Jordan, J. (2000) Shame and Humiliation: From Isolation to Relational Transformation. Stone Center Work in Progress No. 88.

Hockenberry, John. (1995). Moving Violations. New York, New York.

Jordan, J., Kaplan, A. Miller, J.B., Stiver, I. Surrey, J. (1991) Women's Growth in Connection: Writings From the Stone Center. Guilford Press.

Jordan, J. Ed (1997) Woman's Growth in Diversity: More Writings from the Stone Center. Guilford Press.

Longmore, P. (2003) Why I Burned My Book and Other Essays on Disability. Temple Press.

Panzarino, C. (1994) The Me In The Mirror. Seattle: Seal Press.

Saxton, M. and Howe, F. (Eds) (1987) With Wings: An Anthology of Literature By and About Women with Disabilities. New York: The Feminist Press.

Shapiro, J. No Pity: People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement

Swain, J. (2003) Controversial Issues in a Disabling Society (Disability Human Rights and Society) Open Univ Press; (March 2003)

Listservs

- Disability Rights News (Michigan), Yahoo Group
 - To sign up email DisabilityRightsNews@yahoogroups.com or go to www.yahoogroups.com
- Justice for All (National)
 - To sign up go to www.aapd-dc.org
- ICan Weekly News Letter (Michigan based, National coverage)
 - To sign up go to www.iCan.com
- National Center on Secondary Education and Transition E-News
 - To sign up go to http://www.ncset.org
- Ragged Edge Magazine E-Newsletter

- To sign up go to www.ragged-edge-mag.com
- Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Newsletter (National civil rights)
 - To sign up go to www.civilrights.org

Web Resources

- Civil Rights Internships/Job Postings
 - www.idealists.org
- Service Dogs
 - <http://www.caninecompanions.org> - Canine Companions for Independence
 - <http://www.pawswithacause.org> - Paws With a Cause
- General Information
 - <http://www.disabilityresources.org/MICHIGAN.html>
- Disability Law
 - <http://www.disabilitylawupdate.com/> - Disability Law Updates
- ADA Info
 - <http://www.adagreatlakes.org/> - 1- 800- 949-4232 (Voice/TTY) - Great Lakes ADA and IT Tech Center
 - www.disabilityinfo.gov provides info about national disability rights policy from US Department of Justice, Education, Labor, etc
 - <http://www.jan.wvu.edu> Job Accommodations Network provides info on reasonable accommodations in the workplace
 - www.uic.edu/orgs/ada-greatlakes/MI.htm - MI ADA Steering Committee
- Disability Organization Resources:
 - www.ican.com - ICan
 - www.freeourpeople.org - American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today
 - www.nod.org - National Organization on Disabilities
 - <http://www.aapd-dc.org> - American Association of People with Disabilities
 - www.wda.org.au - Women with Disabilities Australia
 - <http://www.wid.org/> - World Institute on Disability
 - www.disabledwomen.net - Disabled Women
 - <http://www.dredf.org> - Disability Rights and Education Fund

Disability Specific

- Mental Illness/Disabilities
 - www.adscenter.org Info on stigma, discrimination, and other topics
 - <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/reasaccom/whatis-psych.html> Basics of psychiatric disabilities with links to resources
 - www.nostirma.org National Mental Health Awareness Campaign
- Mobility Impairments
 - www.newmobility.com New Mobility Magazine
- Visual Impairments
 - www.acb.org American Council of the Blind
 - www.nfb.org National Federation for the Blind

- Hearing Impairments
 - www.nad.org National Association for the Deaf
- Learning Disabilities
 - www.idamerica.org Learning Disabilities Association of America
 - www.idonline.org Learning Disabilities Online
- Chronic Health Disabilities
 - <http://www.invisibledisabilities.com> The Invisible Disability Advocate

State Resources

- MI Protection and Advocacy Service
 - www.mpas.org
 - 1-800-288-5923
- MI Commission on Disability Concerns
 - http://www.michigan.gov/cis/0,1607,7-154-28077_28545---,00.html
 - 1-877- 499-6232
- MI Commission for the Blind
 - http://www.michigan.gov/cis/0,1607,7-154-28077_28313-15006--,00.html
 - 1-800-292-4200

National Resources

- www.aapd-dc.org - American Association of People with Disabilities
- www.ncd.gov - National Council on Disability
- www.wid.org - World Institute on Disability

International Resources

- www.disabilityworld.org - an international webzine of news and views

Disability Publications

- <http://www.ragged-edge-mag.com> – The Ragged Edge
- <http://www.mouthmag.com/> - Mouth
- <http://www.newmobility.com> – New Mobility
- <http://www.pvamagazines.com/sns/> - Sports and Spokes

Disability Culture Resources

Articles About Disability Culture

Finkelstein, Vic, "Disabled People and our Culture Development." DAIL (DISABILITY ART IN LONDON) MAGAZINE ANTHOLOGY: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS (London: DAIL Magazine, 1992), 3-6. <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/finkelstein87a.pdf>

Finkelstein, exiled from South Africa in 1968, journeyed to England where he became a psychologist, retired tutor in Disability Studies at the Open University, UK and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Disability Studies, Leeds University, opened the 1987 London Disability Arts Forum with a brief speech on why disability culture is a crucial component of the disability rights movement.

Finkelstein, Vic, A PERSONAL JOURNEY INTO DISABILITY POLITICS, First presented at Leeds University Centre for Disability Studies, 7th February 2001. <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/finkelstein01a.pdf>

Finkelstein, exiled from South Africa in 1968, journeyed to England where he became a psychologist, retired tutor in Disability Studies at the Open University, UK and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Disability Studies, Leeds University, reviews the development of radical British disability organizations and his own personal history in their evolution and in that of his own thinking.

Gill, Carol J., "A Psychological View of Disability Culture," DISABILITY STUDIES QUARTERLY 15 (4), (Fall 1995), 16-19. <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/gill1995.html>

Gill, Assistant Professor of Human Development and Director of the Chicago Center for Disability Research, University of Illinois, and foremost proponent of disability culture in the 1980s provides an excellent perspective of why the need for a culture, what it is, and what it means for those of us who feel the need to be categorized in it.

Longmore, Paul K., "The Second Phase: From Disability Rights to Disability Culture," DISABILITY RAG & RESOURCE, 16 (5), (Sept./Oct. 1995), 4-11. <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/longm95.html>

Longmore, Professor of History and Director of the Institute on Disability, San Francisco State University, described how the American disability rights movement moved in the mid-1990s from a focus on rights to a quest for collective identity.

Morrison, Elspeth and Vic Finkelstein. 1993. Broken Arts And Cultural Repair: The Role Of Culture In The Empowerment Of Disabled People, First published in Swain, J., Finkelstein, V., French, S., and Oliver, M., DISABLING BARRIERS - ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS, (London, Sage Publications, in association with the Open University, 1993). <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/finkelstein93a.html>

Morrison, former editor of Disability Arts in London magazine, freelance writer and theatre director, and author of the Independent Theatre Council's book on Theatre Practice and Disability and Finkelstein, exiled from South Africa in 1968, journeyed to

England where he became a psychologist, retired tutor in Disability Studies at the Open University, UK and Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Disability Studies, Leeds University, discuss how human beings come together in groups to confirm their identity and how disability arts and culture enable people with disabilities find their way in mainstream culture.

Oliver, Michael J. 1999. "Capitalism, disability and ideology: A materialist critique of the Normalization principle." First published in Flynn, Robert J. and Raymond A. Lemay, A QUARTER-CENTURY OF NORMALIZATION AND SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION: EVOLUTION AND IMPACT, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1999).
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/oliver99.pdf>

Oliver, Professor of Disability Studies, University of Greenwich, London, England, and well-known disability rights advocate, sociologist, and author of many titles, including UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE, argues that the oppression that disabled people face is rooted in the economic and social structures of capitalism and that materialist social theory offers disabled people the opportunity to transform their own lives and in so doing to transform the society in which they live into one in which all roles are valued.

Pfeiffer, David, "The Disability Movement and its History. First published as "Hip Crip 101," MAINSTREAM: MAGAZINE OF THE ABLE-DISABLED, 19, 4 (Dec-Jan 1994-95), 32-37. <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/pfeiffer95.html>

Pfeiffer, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawaii, past president of the Society for Disability Studies, present editor of Disability Studies Quarterly and an early leader of the U.S. disability rights movement while a full time faculty member at Suffolk University in Boston, explores the history of the American disability rights movements through what he considers some of its most classic texts.

Creating a Disability Mythology. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF REHABILITATION RESEARCH, 15, (Winter 1992), 227-33.
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/brown92a.html>

An attempt to reframe how people look at disability from a perception of pride rather than negativity. With a focus on a few heroes the author describes a mythic journey of the disability experience.

Brown, Steven E., "Deviant, Invalids, and Anthropologists: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Conditions of Disability in One Academic Discipline: A Review of Disability and Culture, DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION: AN INTERNATIONAL, MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL, 18 (5) (May 1996), 273-75.
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/brown96d.html>

A critical review of the book DISABILITY AND CULTURE, edited by Benedicte Ingstad and Susan Reynolds Whyte.

Brown, Steven E., "Disability Culture: A Fact Sheet," (Las Cruces, NM: Institute on Disability Culture, 1996). <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/brown96a.html>

A two-page description of the evolution of disability culture through the mid- 1990s.

Brown, Steven E., "Dis-ing Definitions," MAINSTREAM: MAGAZINE OF THE ABLE-DISABLED, 21 (10), (Aug. 1997), 22, 26-27, 29.
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/brown97b.html>

An attempt to reframe what the language about disability means and how people with disabilities do or do not fit into the "norm."

Brown, Steven E., "'Poster Kids No More:' Perspectives About the No-Longer Emerging (In Fact, Vibrant) Disability Culture,"; DISABILITY STUDIES QUARTERLY, 18(1) (Winter 1998), 5-19. <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/brown98a.pdf>

This article attempts to put into perspective the author's view of changes in the ideas and implementation of the disability culture concept. Includes many quotes from previous writings.

Brown, Steven E., "We Are Who We Are... So Who Are We? MAINSTREAM: MAGAZINE OF THE ABLE-DISABLED, 20 (10), (Aug. 1996), 28-30, 32.
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/brown96b.html>

After years of being asked for a short definition of "disability culture" this article attempts a one-paragraph definition and discusses the treacherous nature of definitions in general.

Song Lyrics

Crescendo, Johnny. "The Ballad of Josie Evans." 1993. [Recorded by Johnny Crescendo and the P.O.P. Squad] On PRIDE [Cassette] Derbyshire, England, 1993.
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/evans93.html>

An eloquent, heart-wrenching story of a woman who is abandoned by her government and everyone else to a solitary, but dignified, life and death in a nursing home.

Field, Jane, "The Fishing is Free," THE FISHING IS FREE. (Available while supplies last from the Institute on Disability Culture, 2260 Sunrise Point Rd., Las Cruces, NM 88011, \$10.00 plus S&H). <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/field1994.html>

Field, a Canadian singer and songwriter with a disability is the only singer I know of who consistently uses humor in her tales of disability.

Books About Disability Culture

Brown, Steven E., FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT: INDEPENDENT LIVING HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY (Houston: ILRU, 2000; Available from 2323 S. Shepherd, Suite 1000, Houston, TX 77019, <http://www.ilru.org>).

Brown, Steven E., INVESTIGATING A CULTURE OF DISABILITY: FINAL REPORT (Las Cruces, NM: Institute on Disability Culture, 1994).

Charlton, James I., NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US: DISABILITY OPPRESSION AND EMPOWERMENT (Berkeley: California, 1998).

Crutchfield, Susan and Marcy Epstein, eds., POINTS OF CONTACT: DISABILITY, ART, AND CULTURE (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2000).

Fries, Kenny, STARING BACK: THE DISABILITY EXPERIENCE FROM THE INSIDE OUT (NY: Plume, 1997).

Gallagher, Hugh Gregory, BY TRUST BETRAYED: PATIENTS, PHYSICIANS AND THE LICENSE TO KILL IN THE THIRD REICH (New York: Henry Holt, 1990).

Gallagher, Hugh Gregory, FDR'S SPLENDID DECEPTION (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1985).

Hevey, David, THE CREATURES TIME FORGOT: PHOTOGRAPHY AND DISABILITY IMAGERY (London: Routledge, 1992).

Jacobson, Denise Sherer, THE QUESTION OF DAVID: A DISABLED MOTHER'S JOURNEY THROUGH ADOPTION, FAMILY, AND LIFE (Available from Creative Arts Book Company, 833 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94710, 1999, \$24.50).

Kailes, June Isaacson, DISABILITY PRIDE: THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF SELF-WORTH, SELF-EMPOWERMENT, & DISABILITY CULTURE (Houston: Independent Living Research Utilization, 1993).

Keith, Lois, ed., "WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?" WRITING BY DISABLED WOMEN (New York: New Press, 1994).

Linton, Simi, CLAIMING DISABILITY: KNOWLEDGE AND IDENTITY (NY: New York University, 1998).

Longmore, Paul K. and Lauri Umansky, eds., THE NEW DISABILITY HISTORY: AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES (New York: NYU Press, 2001).

Mairs, Nancy, *WAIST-HIGH IN THE WORLD: A LIFE AMONG THE NONDISABLED*
(Boston: Beacon, 1996).

Websites About Disability Culture

Centre for Disability Studies: University of Leeds
<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies>

Disability Studies Quarterly
<http://www.cds.hawaii.edu>

Disability World Ezine
<http://www.disabilityworld.org/>

Institute on Disability Culture
<http://www.dimenet.com/disculture/> (text)
<http://hometown.aol.com/sbrown8912/index.html> (graphics)

Johnny Crescendo
<http://206.244.52.52/>

London Disability Arts Forum
<http://www.dail.dircon.co.uk/>

Mobility International
<http://www.miusa.org>

National Disability Arts Forum (UK)
<http://ndaf.org/>

Vsa Arts
<http://www.vsaarts.org/>

References

In addition to the references listed as footnotes, information was used from the following sources in compiling this handbook:

(2005-2006). *Organization Manual*. Office of Student Activities and Student Organizations. University of North Carolina. Retrieved on October 10, 2006 from http://carolinaunion.unc.edu/activities_orgs/handbook/index.html.

(2006). *Student Organization Handbook*. Department of Student Life. Michigan State University. Retrieved on October 10, 2006 from http://www.studentlife.msu.edu/current_students/rso/soh.htm.

(2006-2007). *Student Organization Handbook*. George Washington University. Retrieved on October 9, 2006 from <http://studentorgs.gwu.edu/Handbook/>.

Feedback/Evaluation

We would like to hear from you!!!

CONNECT and Connections for Community Leadership believe it is important that our work is valuable and useful for the community. With your feedback and suggestions, we can continue to improve our resources and strive meet the need of students with disabilities. We also believe that people with disabilities know best what they need and we can learn from the very people we hope to assist with leadership development. You have a perspective and knowledge that we would like to tap into.

Please take a moment to complete the following evaluation form. We take all feedback seriously and will use it to continue to revise this handbook to fit the needs of students with disabilities.

Please return form to:

Connections for Community Leadership
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
3498 East Lake Lansing Road, Suite 100
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

You can also fax it to: (517) 333-2677.

Thank you!

Evaluation
Lead On: A Handbook for Starting a Disability Student Organization
Connections for Community Leadership

Date: _____

1. How much did you learn about starting a disability student organization?

None



Some



Much



A lot



2. How likely are you to use the information received in this handbook?

Not at all



Not very likely



Very likely



Definitely



3. Do you plan on starting a student organization at your college/university? Why or why not?

4. If yes, would you like CONNECT to contact you to support you in the process? (please provide contact information)

5. Which sections of this handbook did you find most helpful?

6. Are there topics that are not covered in the handbook that we should add?

7. How can we improve this handbook?


8. Do you have any unanswered questions about starting a student organization? If so, would you like CONNECT to contact you about these questions? (please provide contact information)

9. Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with this handbook?

Very
Dissatisfied


Dissatisfied


Satisfied


Very
Satisfied


Additional Comments or Suggestions:

Thank You!

Please return form to: Connections for Community Leadership, Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, 3498 East Lake Lansing Road, Suite 100, East Lansing, Michigan 48823. You can also fax it to: (517) 333-2677 or email it to: connect@prosynergy.org.