

- Sept. 17th
ADA
celebration
- 2015 Spirit of
Accessibility
Award

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Community Conversations

In May and June of this year, the Council held community conversations to gather information for its next five-year state plan. There were approximately 200 people across the state (people with disabilities, family members and advocates) who attended these sessions. They gave great input to the Council on six topics: employment, housing, transportation, self-advocacy, self-determination and community inclusion. Currently, the results are being compiled and analyzed.



Community Conversation in Gaylord Michigan at Treetops Resort.

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2015 RICC Summit

The 2015 RICC Summit took place on July 17th at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center. The Summit's focus was on person-centered planning. Jill Gerrie and Pat Carver of Michigan Partners of Freedom trained RICC members on person-centered planning (PCP) basics through an interactive activity that helped participants better understand PCP process.

RICC members Erin McMahon, Washtenaw RICC and Jennifer Gentile, Midland RICC, discussed their personal experiences with their person-centered plan as part of a panel discussion; which also included Christy Jane Courtney, who discussed her role as an Independent Facilitator. RICC members from Region 1 presented an entertaining demonstration of a person-centered planning meeting utilizing a peer mentor and independent facilitator. Norm DeLisle, Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, presented "Missing the Potholes, The Trip to a Great Person-Centered Plan."



Martha Swartz (left) of the Cheboygan RICC and Mary Priebe (right) of the Livingston RICC participate in "person-centered planning basics".



RICC members listen to Jill Gerrie and Pat Carver give presentation on "person-centered planning basics".

2015 Spirit of Accessibility Award

The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 25 years ago, signified great changes in accessibility for people with disabilities, especially in transportation. From lifts, to alternative signs, to mobility training, individuals and providers have made significant changes in the accessibility of transportation.

To recognize the achievements of an individual and an organization involved in making this change a reality in Michigan, the Spirit of Accessibility Award was created.

The 2015 recipients of each award, John Waterman and the Rapid, have made a significant contribution to improving the quality of public transportation for people with disabilities. They have also demonstrated leadership and commitment to encourage, facilitate, and/or promote the use of public transportation by people with disabilities.



John Waterman started his career as a public school teacher in Battle Creek, Michigan. In 1988, a student from the special education classroom was hit by a car while riding his bicycle at night, without a helmet, and was severely injured. This event had a lasting impact on John and motivated him to initiate a bike safety program for kids with disabilities.

In 2004, Programs to Educate all Cyclists (PEAC) opened its doors. PEAC is a non-profit dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with disabilities by using cycling as a mode of transportation, integrated recreation, fitness, and therapy.

Spirit of Accessibility continued...

Today, John has taught many young adults with disabilities to cycle safely, take the bus and independently advocate for transit. Transit education for these individuals will allow them to remain active and independent.



The Rapid, a public transit provider in Grand Rapids, promotes and encourages the reliable, efficient, and accessible public transportation service to everyone in the community. From encouraging the use of fixed bus routes, offering free travel training and providing accessible bus stops to maintaining a good ADA paratransit service, the Rapid is dedicated to making sure everyone who wants the freedom, that using public transit offers, is able to access and use it to meet their public transit needs.

The Rapid is dedicated to providing the people in the community it serves with the best transportation options. By continuing to work with the disability community, putting information on their website and through social media, The Rapid is leading the way to ensure public transit users with disabilities are served well and included into the fabric of the community.



The Rapid Bus

25th Anniversary ADA Celebration: Sept. 17th

What is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

It is an important civil rights law for individuals with disabilities. It bans discrimination against individuals with disabilities in jobs, schools, transportation and other areas of life.

September 17th

The 25th Anniversary of the signing of the ADA was July 26th. There will be a huge celebration on September 17th from 11:00 am to 2:00pm in Lansing on the Capitol Lawn to commemorate the day. Lieutenant Governor Calley will be giving opening remarks; various entertainment. We hope you can help celebrate this historic day by attending!

save the date: SEPTEMBER 17
Michigan Capitol • Lansing

AMERICANS 25 YEARS • 1990-2015
WITH DISABILITIES ACT
celebrate • educate • advocate

Join us on the Michigan Capitol Lawn in Lansing
Thursday, September 17, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the ADA

To learn more about the anniversary and how you can participate, visit
ADA National Network : <https://adata.org/ada-anniversary>

Workgroup Updates:

Transportation: The group met with over 40 providers at the July Transportation Summit to discuss the Universal ADA card. Currently, next steps are being discussed. The Non-Emergency Medical Transportation brochure is in its final stages.

Housing: Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) addressed the group about Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 811 vouchers. They are looking at all communities throughout Michigan for people with disabilities who need housing and are with the Community Mental Health (CMH) system. MSHDA held three input sessions to discuss the HUD 811 vouchers. The group met with a representative from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services gave the group updates on Home and Community Based Services.

IFSEA: The staff is assisting MI Family Voices in revising the resource toolkit for individuals and families. The workgroup is also refocusing its efforts on self-determination.

Health: The workgroup is monitoring integrated care for people dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid.

Economic Justice: The workgroup is working with partners to advocate for an Employment First! Policy at the state level through implementation of the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) technical assistance grant. Four focus areas are underway: provider transformation, rate reimbursement and restructuring, provider training, and mapping the transition system.

Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act was became a law in December of 2014. This law will allow people with disabilities to set up a special saving account called an ABLE account. It is a tax-free savings account and money in the account must be used for disability related cost. For people with disabilities, this means you can save money without the threat of losing Medicaid or other supports and services. The holder of the account will be able to save up to \$100,000 without losing benefits. Each state will set the maximum amount a person can deposit without paying a tax.

What does this mean for Michigan?

Each state will have to create ABLE account rules and regulations. Currently, 41 states including the District of Columbia have introduced or passed ABLE legislation. Michigan has introduced legislation but nothing has passed yet. Under Michigan's proposed legislation, a person will be able to put tax deferred money into their ABLE account, up to \$5,000 a year (if you are single) or \$10,000 (if you are a married couple).

For more information on ABLE Act or ABLE Accounts, please contact Brett Williams at: williamsb18@michigan.gov or 517-335-3139

Legislation

Legislation	Workgroup/Committee
S1177 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (<i>Federal</i>)	IFSEA/Public Policy Committee
Bill-113-HR803enr(enrolled/ signed into law) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (<i>Federal</i>)	Economic Justice/ Public Policy Committee
HB4541, HB4542, HB4543, HB4544, SB359, SB360, SB361, SB362 Achieving Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act (<i>State</i>)	Public Policy Committee
HB4724 Absentee Voting (<i>State</i>)	Public Policy Committee

For more information on these bills, please contact Brett Williams at: williamsb18@michigan.gov or 517-335-3139.

