



Connecting with the Disability Community: Local, State, and National Organizations and Agencies

There are literally thousands of local, state, and national disability-related organizations and agencies that can provide you with training, information, referrals, and resources. The information in this chapter will give you information to locate the organization you need. You may want to add a local agency to your mailing list, contact a state organization to provide training at your next service provider/staff meeting, or connect with a national association for more information about a particular disability. The resources in this chapter will assist you with your outreach and inclusion efforts.

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National Service Inclusion Project

The National Service Inclusion Project (NSIP) is a Corporation for National and Community Service training and technical assistance provider. NSIP builds connections between disability organizations and state commissions, offices, and service programs. NSIP is a cooperative agreement between the Corporation for National and Community Service and a collaborative effort of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston and the Association of University Centers on Disabilities.



NSIP Offers:

- Regional, state, and program training to AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and Senior Corps programs
- Individualized technical assistance (onsite, phone, or email)
- Resources on service and disability issues such as recruitment, ADA accommodations, and training, including fact sheets and an Inclusion Handbook

Michigan Disability Resource Directory

Whether you are searching for information on a specific disability, looking for a training provider on disability issues, or want to diversify your recruitment contact list, the Michigan Disability Resource Directory is your primary resource for information on disability-related agencies and organizations throughout the state of Michigan.

The Michigan Disability Resource Directory is an extensive, searchable database of hundreds of Michigan agencies and organizations providing support and services to people with disabilities throughout the state.

To access the database:

Go to the following link: <http://mdrd.state.mi.us/>

Ways to Search:

Using the online directory, you can search in the following ways:

- Disability (Down Syndrome, Stroke, etc.)
- Service (education/training, transportation, etc.)
- Agency Name (if you know the name of the agency)
- Using a map of Michigan (first by region, then by county)
- Geographic search (county, city, township, village, or zip code)



Michigan Disability Resources – Quick Reference

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC) - <http://www.copower.org/mdrc/MDRC.htm>

MDRC is a statewide network of individuals and organizations that advances the issues of Michigan's disability community through grassroots activism, public education and advocacy. MDRC works to build opportunities for people with disabilities so they may live fully integrated lives within their chosen communities, now and in the future.

- Sign Language Interpreters
- Statewide Service for the Hearing Impaired

E-Michigan Deaf and Hard of Hearing People - <http://www.michdhh.org/index.html>

The mission of the Coalition is to provide a forum to promote networking, communication, and information sharing, collaboration, and service delivery through the mutual efforts of its diverse membership. To put it simply, they are a dedicated group of people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing, working together to improve life in Michigan for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- Training Provider

Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC)

http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-28077_28545---,00.html

The MCDC, which includes the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing, responds to and advocates on behalf of Michigan's 1.9 million people with disabilities.

- Assistive Technology

Michigan's Assistive Technology Resource (MATR) - <http://www.matr.org/>

The overall purpose of MATR is to provide information services, support materials, training, and technical assistance to local and intermediate school districts in Michigan to increase their capacity to address the needs of students with disabilities for assistive technology.

Disability Network / Centers for Independent Living of Michigan

Michigan Disability Network/CIL's: <http://www.dnmichigan.org/>

National Disability Networks/CIL's: <http://www.ilru.org/index.html>.



Independent Living is the principle that individuals with any disability, to the fullest extent possible, shall work, live in their own homes, raise families, and participate in the everyday activities of life. Disability Networks/Centers for Independent Living (CIL's) are typically non-residential, private, non-profit, consumer-controlled, community-based organizations providing services and advocacy by and for persons with all types of disabilities. This is an excellent first-contact for information regarding disability issues and for outreach and recruitment activities.

- Information and Referral Services
- Community Awareness and Advocacy
- Individual Skills Development
- Peer Support



The Job Accommodation Network

A Service of the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy

JAN's trusted consultants offer one-on-one guidance on workplace accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related legislation, and self-employment and entrepreneurship options for people with disabilities. Assistance is available both over the phone and online. Those who can benefit from JAN's services include private employers of all sizes, government agencies, employee representatives, and service providers, as well as people with disabilities and their families.

JAN Electronic Resources - <http://askjan.org/>

JAN's award-winning website is your gateway to information on JAN services, accommodations, legal information, and other resources to assist employment of people with disabilities.

- The Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR) - <http://askjan.org/soar/>
SOAR allows you to locate accommodation options for a worker with a disability by providing information on disabling conditions, accommodation products and techniques.

Resources for Creating Inclusive Service-Learning Programs

Service-learning can be an effective method for actively engaging students with and without disabilities in the learning process. It provides benefits for students (work-related skills, self-esteem), teachers (sense of service, raised expectations), and the community organizations in which they serve (exposure to diverse populations). The following resources can assist you with ensuring your service-learning projects are inclusive:



- **The Knowledge Network Classroom Internet Library**
<http://www.nhptv.org/kn/vs/speced.asp>
This website has links to information on specific disabilities, inclusion resources, and other tools that can be useful to both school and community-based programs.
- **Inclusion Network**
<http://www.inclusion.com/>
Access books, online articles, and a free e-newsletter with strategies for building inclusion into your program.
- **Learn and Serve America's National Service-Learning Clearinghouse**
<http://www.servicelearning.org/>
Service-Learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.



National Disability Agencies and Organizations

The Access Board (<http://www.access-board.gov/>)

The Access Board is an independent federal agency devoted to accessibility for people with disabilities. It operates with about 30 staff and a governing board of representatives from Federal departments and public members appointed by the President.

Adaptive Environments Center, Inc (<http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/index.php>)

Adaptive Environments (AE) is a non-profit organization founded in 1978 to address the environmental issues that confront people with disabilities and elderly people. AE promotes accessibility as well as universal design through education programs, technical assistance, training, consulting, publications and design advocacy. Its mission is to promote, facilitate, and advocate for international adoption of policies and designs that enable every individual, regardless of disability or age, to participate fully in all aspects of society.

American Council of the Blind (<http://www.acb.org/>)

The American Council of the Blind is the nation's leading membership organization of blind and visually impaired people. It was founded in 1961 and incorporated in the District of Columbia. The Council strives to improve the well-being of all blind and visually impaired people by serving as a representative national organization of blind people.

The American Diabetes Association (<http://www.diabetes.org/>)

The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading nonprofit health organization providing diabetes research, information, and advocacy. The mission of the organization is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

The Foundation for the Blind (<http://www.afb.org/>)

Since 1921, the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), to which Helen Keller devoted more than 40 years of her life, has been eliminating barriers that prevent people who are blind or visually impaired from reaching their potential. The AFB is dedicated to addressing the critical issues of literacy, independent living, employment, and access.

American Lung Association (<http://www.lungusa.org/>)

The American Lung Association (ALA) is the oldest voluntary health organization in the United States, with a national office and constituent and affiliate associations around the country. Founded in 1904 to fight tuberculosis, ALA today fights lung disease in all its forms, with special emphasis on asthma, tobacco control, and environmental health.

American Speech, Language, Hearing Association (<http://www.asha.org/>)

ASLHA's mission is to ensure that all people with speech, language, and hearing disorders have access to quality services to help them communicate effectively. Access their web site to find information to help you understand communication and communication disorders as well as a referral service.

The Arc of the United States (<http://www.thearc.org/page.aspx?pid=2530>)

The Arc promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.



Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (<http://www.aafa.org>)

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with asthma and allergies and their caregivers, through education, advocacy, and research.

The Caption Center (<http://main.wgbh.org/wgbh/pages/mag>)

Founded in 1972, The Caption Center was the world's first captioning agency—pioneering access to television for viewers who are deaf or hard of hearing. It has gone on to set the standard for caption quality, as well as for cutting-edge software and systems development designed to improve the captioning process. The Caption Center maintains an ongoing commitment to conducting outreach among viewers with hearing loss, those learning English as a second language, and people of all ages learning to read.

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

(<http://www.chadd.org>)

CHADD is a national nonprofit organization providing education, advocacy, and support for individuals with AD/HD. In addition to their web site, CHADD also publishes a variety of printed materials to keep members and professionals current on research advances, medications, and treatments affecting individuals with AD/HD.

DisabilityInfo.gov (<http://www.disabilityinfo.gov>)

This Federal web site of disability-related government resources contains information on employment, education, housing, transportation, health, income support, technology, community life, and civil rights. It provides a one-stop portal for people with disabilities, their families, employers, service providers, and other community members.

Epilepsy Foundation (<http://www.efa.org/>)

The Epilepsy Foundation is dedicated to the welfare of people with epilepsy. Their mission: to work for children and adults affected by seizures through research, education, advocacy, and service.

Immune Deficiency Foundation (<http://www.primaryimmune.org>)

The mission of the Immune Deficiency Foundation is to improve the diagnosis & treatment of patients with primary immunodeficiency diseases through research and education.

Learning Disability Association of America (<http://www.ldanatl.org>)

The Learning Disability Association of America (LDA) was formed in 1964 by a group of concerned parents on behalf of children with learning disabilities. LDA is devoted to defining and finding solutions for the broad spectrum of learning disabilities. LDA has 50 state affiliates and more than 600 local chapters in 50 states, Washington DC, and Puerto Rico. Membership is composed of individuals with learning disabilities, family members, concerned professionals, and advocates.

Lighthouse International (<http://www.navh.org>)

Work's with millions of people worldwide to provide assistance to those with partial vision loss. Recognized by the American Medical Association, our dream is to make everyone aware of the differences between vision impairment and blindness.



National Association of the Deaf (<http://www.nad.org>)

The National Association of the Deaf (NAD), established in 1880, is the oldest and largest constituency organization safeguarding the accessibility and civil rights of 28 million deaf and hard of hearing Americans in education, employment, telecommunications, and health care. A private, nonprofit organization, NAD is a federation of 51 state association affiliates including the District of Columbia, organizational affiliates, and direct members.

National Braille Press (<http://www.nbp.org>)

National Braille Press is one of the world's leading producers of Braille. Access their web site for information about their services, including an online catalog.

National Brain Injury Association of America (<http://www.biausa.org/>)

Founded in 1980 as the National Head Injury Association, the Brain Injury Association (BIA) is a national nonprofit organization with the mission of creating a better future through brain injury prevention, research, education, and advocacy.

National Center for Learning Disabilities (<http://www.nclld.org/>)

The mission of the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) is to increase opportunities for all individuals with learning disabilities (LD) to achieve their potential. NCLD accomplishes its mission by increasing public awareness and understanding of learning disabilities; conducting educational programs and services that promote research-based knowledge; and providing national leadership in shaping public policy.

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (<http://www.ncadd.org/>)

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) provides education, information, help, and hope to the public. It advocates prevention, intervention, and treatment through offices in New York and Washington, and a nationwide network of affiliates.

National Down Syndrome Society (<http://www.ndss.org/>)

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) was established in 1979 to “ensure that all people with Down syndrome have the opportunity to achieve their full potential in community life.” NDSS works to increase public awareness about Down syndrome and discover its underlying causes through research, education, and advocacy.

National Mental Health Association (<http://www.nmha.org/>)

The National Mental Health Association (NMHA) is the country's oldest and largest nonprofit organization addressing all aspects of mental health and mental illness. NMHA works to improve the mental health of all Americans, especially through advocacy, education, research, and service.

National Organization on Disability (<http://www.nod.org/>)

The National Organization on Disability promotes the full and equal participation and contribution of America's men, women, and children with disabilities in all aspects of life.

Scleroderma Foundation (<http://www.scleroderma.org/>)

The Scleroderma Foundation has a three-fold mission: to help patients and their families cope with scleroderma through mutual support programs, peer counseling, physician



referrals, and educational information; to promote public awareness and education through patient and health professional seminars, literature, and publicity campaigns; and to stimulate and support research to improve treatment and ultimately find the cause of and cure for scleroderma and related diseases.

The Stuttering Foundation of America (<http://www.stuttersfa.org/>)

The Stuttering Foundation provides free online resources, services, and support to those who stutter and their families, as well as support for research into the causes of stuttering. They work towards the prevention and improved treatment of stuttering and offer educational programs.

United Cerebral Palsy (<http://www.ucp.org/>)

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) is a leading service provider and advocate for adults and children with disabilities, including cerebral palsy. As one of the largest health nonprofits in America, the UCP mission is to advance the independence, productivity and full citizenship of people with disabilities through an affiliate network.