



A Successful Freedom Fair Fireworks Festival

The 2018 Fireworks Festival & Freedom Fair was a huge success. The afternoon started off with an amazing performance by Logan McCarthy singing the National Anthem. This year we had around 65 vendors that participated including a variety of food, community services and information on disabilities. Activities included a stilt walker, magician, juggler and balloon artist which entertained festival attendees for hours. Many people participated in the Coney Island's hot dog eating contest and in the Lawrence County Builders Association's Lego Building Contest. The evening finished with a stunning Fireworks display by Zambelli. Congratulations to the 4 people who won the drawing for fireworks which were donated by Sky King: Kristen Book, Paula Mione, DeAnte Lewis and Stacey Denk. Next year's event is already in the planning stages. Stay tuned for the 2019 date that will be announced shortly, you won't want to miss it!



Autumn Bash

Upcoming Events:

Autumn Bash

Sat., Sept. 29th

Casino Trip

Thurs., Oct. 18th

Halloween Hop

Thurs., Oct. 25th

The Autumn Bash is Saturday, September 29th from 5-9 pm, located at the Lawrence County Fair Grounds. The Autumn Bash is hosted and sponsored by: Lawrence County 4-H, Disability Options Network, United Way, and the Lawrence County Fair.

The Autumn Bash is open to children, youth & adults with disabilities and families. Enjoy great food to eat! Also, bring a side-dish or dessert to share. Fried chicken, hot dogs & drinks will be provided FREE!

Come and visit the petting zoo, play carnival games, make crafts, ride horses, enjoy a hayride, meet clowns, jesters, and jugglers. Also, there will be face painting, tree slice painting, Adapted Sports-Special Olympics, plus the popular silly string war, and much more.

Social Security Benefits for Those with Disabilities

Social Security Administration manages two programs that provide benefits based on disability or blindness, the Social Security Disability Insurance program (SSDI) and the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. Social Security Disability Insurance provides benefits to people with disabilities or people with blindness who are "insured" by worker's contributions to the Social Security trust fund. These contributions are based on your earnings (or those of your spouse or parents) as required by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). Title II of the Social Security Act authorizes SSDI benefits. Your dependents may also be eligible for benefits from your earnings record.

Supplemental Security Income Program makes cash assistance payments to aged, blind and those with disabilities (including children) who have limited income and resources. The Federal Government funds SSI from general tax revenues. Many states pay a supplemental benefit to persons in addition to their Federal benefits. Some of these states have arrangements to combine their supplemental payment with the Federal SSI payment into one monthly check to you. Other states manage their own programs and make their payments separately. Title XVI of the Social Security Act authorizes SSI benefits.

Some people receive concurrent benefits under both programs. For those that want more income through some type of employment, it is important to understand the level of income you may have before your benefits are impacted. One entity that offers benefits counseling is AHEDD which can be reached by calling 1-866-902-4333.



2018 PA ELECTIONS IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- **First day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot.....September 17**
- **Last day to REGISTER before the November election.....October 9**
- **Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot.....October 30**
- **Last day for County Boards of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots.....November 2**
- **General Election.....November 6**



Gov. Wolf Urges Congress to Pass Disability Incentive Act

Governor Wolf is urging Congress to pass S.3260, the Disability Employment Incentive Act, sponsored by Sen. Bob Casey, which will support those employers who already seek to bring in the talents and skills of individuals with disabilities and will help to promote a change in hiring practices to encourage those who have not hired individuals with disabilities to open their doors.

“People with disabilities deserve the right to be included in all aspects of life – including the workplace,” Governor Wolf said. “My administration has made this a priority. I urge Congress to make these incentives available more broadly to encourage more businesses to prioritize hiring people with disabilities.

“My 2018-2019 budget included \$74 million in support of programs and services for Pennsylvanians with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder. This funding ensures that Pennsylvanians with intellectual disabilities or autism will be able to use support coordination to help find and use resources in their communities.

Funding in the 2018-2019 budget supports:

- 100 individuals transitioning from the emergency waiting list to the Consolidated Waiver;
- 800 students graduating in 2018 in the Person/Family Directed Support Waiver and the Community Living Waiver;
- 40 individuals transitioning from the interest list to the Adult Community Autism Program (ACAP).

“My goal is to ensure that individuals with an intellectual disability or autism and their families have support at every stage and transition in their lives. Connecting graduates to services helps them find jobs and navigate the next step of their lives with confidence.”

Ramp Crawl 2018

On Thursday, July 26th a lively crew of disability advocates and community members joined forces for the 4th Annual Oakland for All Ramp Crawl at Schenley Plaza in the heart of Oakland. July 26th is also the anniversary of when the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was signed into law by United States President George H.W. Bush. At this year's ramp crawl event we celebrated the piece of legislation's 28th birthday. About 75-100 people were in attendance of the event. The idea of the ramp crawl is to thank the local bars and restaurants in the area who have made the conscientious efforts to be Americans with Disabilities Act compliant, while also calling attention to those public establishments which remain inaccessible to the disability community at large either due to steps, narrow doorways, high table tops, or a lack of wheelchair accessible restrooms. We want to send a message that we are valued members of society and deserving of barrier-free access to public establishments. We are also willing consumers and want to participate within our own communities just like everyone else. It was a great night filled with lively conversation with delicious food and good spirits.

Housing Updates

DON just submitted a grant application to FHLBank Pittsburgh to build 5 new accessible homes on New Castle's Lower East Side. The homes will be 2-3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, with an attached garage. FHLBank Pittsburgh will announce winners of the grant on December 13th. If awarded, DON will begin construction of the new homes in March of 2019 with the first home scheduled to be completed around June of 2019. Although homes will be sold through a bidding process, priority will be given to individuals with a disability, recovering from domestic violence, or homelessness. These homes are a part of a much larger project spearheaded by DON to create a more inclusive integrated neighborhood. More information will be provided in future issues of the DON Dipatch.

DON also just completed 2 other grant applications to the USDA for their Housing Preservation Grant. If awarded, DON will receive up to \$100,000 to make vital home repairs for rural homeowners with a disability. This grant is a continuation of the grant DON is currently administering but will be expanded to cover all the following counties: Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Lawrence, Mercer, and Westmoreland counties. More information about this program can be found at

www.doninc.org/hpp

Disability Options Network Meets with PA Rep. Dan Miller

On Wednesday, August 1st, staff from Disability Options Network was invited to meet with State Representative Dan Miller. Representative Miller is from the new 42nd District which encompasses Mount Lebanon, Dormont, Baldwin Twp., Castle Shannon and portions of Pittsburgh, Scott and Brookline in Allegheny County. The topics of discussion included the effects of managed care on southwestern PA, proposed House Bill 2069, next year's summit on physical disabilities, insurance coverage for durable medical equipment, and the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The goals and activities of the Center for Independent Living and DON Services were also described to Representative Miller.

The official summary of HB 2069 reads as: "Making an appropriation from the General Fund to the Department of Labor and Industry for a statewide program to facilitate communication for individuals who are deafblind."

The representatives of the Center for Independent Living asked Representative Miller questions about the bill. Representative Miller stated that the funding for the bill would not come out of any existing programs. He also said that he would work in the future toward goals that would help individuals with a variety of disabilities. Representative Miller was thanked for his willingness to communicate with the Center for Independent Living.

Representative Miller requested the assistance from the Center for Independent Living in planning the disability summit for 2019 so that it will be inclusive of individuals with physical disabilities.

Representative Miller was very gracious and open during the meeting and clearly pledged his support to advancing causes that benefit the rights of individuals with all disabilities.

The Future of Medicine

Imagine that you are diagnosed with high blood pressure. There is a good chance that you will come out of your doctor's office with the exact same prescription for the exact same medication as millions of other Americans. If that medication does not produce the right results, you will be asked try different medications until you find the one that works for you. It is a combination of one-size-fits-all and a game of hit or miss. Why is this? Because we don't have enough information for doctors to personalize medicine.

The All of Us Pennsylvania research program is trying to change that. All of Us Pennsylvania is a new initiative working to advance personalized medicine by enrolling up to 150,000 local participants in Pennsylvania to help medical researchers better understand, prevent, diagnose, and treat disease. Researchers will be able to develop medicines and treatments based on those with similar genes, lifestyles, ages, and ethnic backgrounds. The study is part of a national research program that aims to enroll one million or more people across the country.

You can help with this effort:

Step 1: Call 412-383-2737 to schedule an appointment at any one of the All of Us PA locations available in the North Hills, South Hills, City of Pittsburgh, Monroeville, and Altoona.

Step 2: Complete your one-time research visit that involves and filling out an online consent form completing surveys about your lifestyle and family health history, and agreeing to securely share your electronic medical record. In addition, your height, weight, and blood pressure will be measured and blood and urine samples collected.

Step 3: Collect your compensation and stay connected! At the completion of your visit, you will receive a \$25.00 gift card. In the future, you will receive genetic and other lab test results from your participation in the study. You may also be invited back to participate in other research opportunities. You will be doing it for your own health and the health of future generations.

Go to joinallofuspa.org for more information.



Meet your Independent Living Coordinators

My name is Phillip Webster and I am an Independent Living Coordinator with Disability Options Network, the Center for Independent Living. I am a family man with an amazing wife, a lovely little girl and a new baby boy. I work with individuals, helping them to be as independent as possible. The best thing we can do for someone is help them learn how to be independent and an advocate for themselves. We all have weakness that we deal with daily. As someone with dyslexia, I learned that the barriers in life are not final, but obstacles that can be bypassed in many ways. I still struggle with reading and simple spelling, but I have tools that help me. It will take me more time than others and I will make many little mistakes in the process, but it does not stop me. Relying on others when needed is very helpful. We all need help, but we shouldn't rely on others for the things we can do for ourselves. As Independent Living Coordinators our goal is to help the consumers we work with find the resources and tools they need. One of the great things I see working with our Durable Medical Equipment Re-use program is how just a simple tool like a wheelchair can free a person to get out in the community. This is the independence we want for all of our consumers.

Craft Corner

Disability Options Network is a great place to showcase and sell your hand-made items. We accept items created by people with disabilities for display and marketing, as space is available.

If you wish to submit items, please contact Kris Scanlon at (724)-652-5144. Vendors will be responsible for stocking items and providing pricing details.

OUT and ABOUT

Annual Casino Gathering

Disability Options Network is once again organizing a trip to Rivers Casino in Pittsburgh, PA on Thursday, October 18th. The DON bus has been reserved to travel from New Castle to the casino with limited seats on a first come, first served basis. The DON bus will be leaving from the office -- 831 Harrison Street in New Castle -- at 12 noon and returning at 4:30pm. Lawrence, Beaver and Butler County transportation providers may also run a bus that goes to the casino. These providers often offer play credits for those that use their ride service to travel to Rivers. There are a few casino rules: Must be 21 to enter the casino, must carry a photo ID, and no outside food or beverages are allowed inside the casino.

If you are interested in going or would like more information, please call Phillip Webster at (724) 652-5144

Travel Discounts for members!clubGO gives you 10%-60% off on U.S. hotels!
<https://clubgo.accessiblego.com/don?p=home&a=join&pid=C73757B2>

Disability Options Network is pleased to introduce a new service to consumers seeking to travel. AccessibleGO.com is a platform for accessible travel, offering bookings, reviews and community. You can now use sign up for clubGO, accessibleGO's **Free** travel discount program, exclusively for people with disabilities!

Starting today, when you write an Accessibility Review about a hotel or attraction on accessibleGO, you'll enter our giveaway just for Disability Options Network. The winning hotel reviewer will receive a \$250 travel voucher!

Community Counseling Center of Mercer County is pleased to announce the Second Annual Health and Wellness Fair. The fair will be held at Community Counseling Center of Mercer County on 2201 East State Street in Hermitage on Wednesday, September 19 from 12-3pm.

For More Information Visit or Follow Us:



/donservices

/Disability.Options.Network



@cil_don