

IMPACT Advocate

IMPACT CIL ° 2735 E. BROADWAY ° ALTON, IL 62002

Will the Governor's Cuts to the FY 2011 Budget Affect You?

By Cathy Contarino, Executive Director

On March 10, Governor Quinn delivered his budget address. The FY11 proposed budget Governor Quinn released includes unacceptable cuts to human services—totaling \$276 million. These cuts will affect seniors, people with disabilities, with significant cuts to community services and supports for people with developmental disabilities and people with mental illness.

We need your help now, more than ever before! Here is how you can help:

1) Contact your legislators by phone or mail and ask them to **OPPOSE CUTS TO HUMAN SERVICES**. It is important that you tell your personal story and what cuts to Human Service, including services for people with disabilities, will mean to you. No one can tell your story better than you.

You can locate the contact information on you State Legislator from the Illinois.gov website. You can also call us at IMPACT CIL and we can send you a list of your legislators.

2) Contact your local media to let them know how

these cuts will directly affect you and your local community.

3) Call us at IMPACT CIL (618-462-1411) and let us know that you would like to help with these advocacy efforts. We will keep you alert to actions that are occurring locally as well as statewide.

The sooner you take this action, the more effective it will be. It is important to let your legislators know that they work for you.

It is vital that we fight the good fight!

Spring 2010

Volume 2, Issue 4

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Improving Access to Our Community By Cathy Contarino, Executive Director

IMPACT CIL has recently completed two community accessibility projects through our

Independence Fund. IMPACT contributed funds for the completions of a paved accessible pathway for the Discovery Garden at LaVista Park in Godfrey. IMPACT also contributed funds toward the completion of a concrete ramp into Crisis Food Services in Alton, Illinois. There was a dedication for this new ramp on April 10, 2010.



Discovery Garden at LaVista Park in Godfrey.



Now everyone can enjoy the garden.

The Independence Fund was established about 10 years ago to assist persons with disabilities to obtain assistive technology or other items that

will maintain independence. In 2009, we amended our guidelines to include the completion of no more than 5 Community Projects per fiscal year. The Independence Fund was developed and is sustained by funds raised through our annual Trivia Night and Auction/

Luncheon Events. Community Projects may include, but are not limited to: accessibility projects, purchase of a computer with adaptive software, accessible play ground equipment, etc.



Cathy uses the new ramp at the Crisis Food Center.

To contribute to the Independence Fund or for more information, please contact Violet Evans at 618-462-1411, extension 304.

Effective Communication Device: UbiDuo Face to Face Communicator

By Angela Botz, ILS/Deaf Services

The UbiDuo is a communication device that enables deaf and/or hard of hearing and hearing people to communicate with each other face to face, anywhere, anytime without any barriers.

This device enables a deaf person to communicate at job interviews, professional discussions, group meetings, doctor's office, or fun chats with friends, in lieu of interpreters. It is portable, wireless, battery-powered, stand-alone communication by means of two displays and two keyboards.

A majority of people are unaware of these devices available and it opens up a bridge to close the gap between the hearing and deaf worlds.

One of my consumers and his caseworker were very frustrated and unable to communicate with each other. I set up the UbiDuo. When they saw this device and

learned they were able to communicate by typing their conversation back and forth, their eyes widened and they started to smile! They then were laughing and enjoying the conversation! The caseworker was so happy he said he would like to borrow the device to continue the case on this consumer.

If you are interested to know more about the UbiDuo Face to Face Communicator, you can go to www.scommonline.com for more information.



lifemyway advocacy in action



TUESDAY, MAY 25, 2010
5:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

SILVER CREEK MILL
602 SOUTH JEFFERSON (RTE 4)
MASCOUTAH, IL 62258

SANDWICHES & BEVERAGES
AVAILABLE!
DONATIONS ACCEPTED

Do you have a disability?

Do you love someone with a disability?

Do you want to live life your way?

Are you confused and frustrated about services?

Learn how we can work together!

Disability advocates from across Illinois will be meeting in their local communities to talk about the current status of disability services, to discuss opportunities for advocacy, and to plan legislative forums in June and July.

Please join us! Our futures depend on YOU!!!

Register by emailing teresa@familysupportnetwork.org

Or calling 309-693-8981

Hosted by Trinity services, LINC, Illinois Center for Autism, IMPACT, and DD Services of Metro East.

Rally in Springfield By Angela Botz, ILS/Deaf Services

As part of the Responsible Budget Coalition's "We Can't Wait" Campaign, the RBC held a huge rally in Springfield on Wednesday, February 17, 2010. It was a success and we crashed the capitol, bringing thousands of activists from every part of the state to send the message that vital services—education, health care, child care, human services and more—need a responsible budget now.

We filled the capitol to push lawmakers to approve a spending plan that would spare potential cuts to human services programs like IMPACT CIL. The crowd urged legislators to pass House Bill 174, which passed

the Senate last year, but stalled in the House. This legislation would increase the state income tax from 3% to 5% and would make other changes to bring billions of dollars in new revenue. I signed my speech and my interpreter spoke out loud as I spoke on behalf of INCIL about our services to people with disabilities.



People flooded the capitol in Springfield on February 17th.

WE WILL NOT GIVE UP!

Do you want action? Here's how you can help—make calls to your state representative and try to generate as many calls as possible. Call your state rep directly at their Springfield office or the capitol switchboard at 217-782-2000. Use the following link to look up the state rep in your area: <http://www.elections.il.gov/DistrictLocator/SelectSerachType.aspx>.

Tell them, "Stop devastating cuts to schools, hospitals, human service and state and local governments! Support House Bill 174!"

Consumer Spotlight on the Community Reintegration Program By Shelly Richardson and Tiffany Breden, ILS/CRP



**Keith Brown,
CRP Consumer**

Wouldn't it feel terrible to be only 55 years old (or any age for that matter) and feel like you could be stuck in a nursing home for the rest of your life? That is how Keith Brown of East Alton felt until he was referred to our Community Reintegration Program in June of last year. Keith suffered severe leg trauma after a motorcycle accident last year and had to undergo major surgeries to repair his bones. These injuries, along with other medical conditions, landed him in the nursing home for recovery and extended therapy. The home that Keith lived in before the accident was inaccessible to him now because there were steep steps to climb and Keith was using a wheelchair at that

time. Keith could not afford to pay for a ramp, nor could he afford many of the other things that he would need in his home to help him with daily living.

Exasperation and anger are the feelings Keith expressed the first time we met him. This changed over time as he began to understand that this program is for real. I say this because most people find it hard to

"I wish more people knew about this program."

believe that CRP can actually help a consumer locate suitable housing, pay deposit and first month's rent, pay for home modifications and medical equipment not covered by insurance, supply needed furniture and household items, and provide for the first month's groceries, as well as assess for Personal Assistant services which are paid for by the state of Illinois.

Through Community Reintegration Program funds

we were able to make Keith's home accessible and purchase needed equipment so that he could return to his home. On a recent visit we asked Keith if he could put into his own words how he feels about the Community Reintegration Program. He said, "Bottom line—it's a miracle. If it had not been for this program I might still be stuck in the nursing home. All of this means more than words can express. I am just amazed at how you all bent over backwards to help me. I wish more people knew about this program. That's the biggest downfall {of CRP}—people not knowing."



Keith's ramp paid for by CRP funds. His home is now accessible.

Transitional Housing Grant

By Missy Kichline, General ILS

An ARRA project IMPACT is working on is the Madison County Community Development Reintegration Transitional Housing Grant. This project allows IMPACT to assist community members who are

homeless or in institutions other than a nursing home to find accessible, affordable housing. The original goal was to assist ten people. However, it appears that we will be able to assist eleven people to find housing.

This project will also provide a few months rent, furniture and contents needed for an apartment and one month's worth of groceries. We have successfully moved two people from institutions into our community.

Rural Ramp and Home Modification Project

By Missy Kichline, General ILS

The Rural Ramp and Home Modification Project is an America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funded project. This project will build a minimum of eight ramps and at least two major home modifications for consumers in IMPACT's rural service area counties and Madison County. IMPACT serves the rural counties of Calhoun, Greene, Jersey,

Bond and Macoupin. This is a wonderful opportunity for IMPACT to provide a much needed service to our rural consumers. This is a two-year project. We hope to complete a ramp in each of our rural counties. Two ramps have been completed in Macoupin County. We are



also working on two in Madison County and one in Greene. A ramp may not seem like much but at least it will allow a few folks in rural settings the chance to get out of their house and go uptown for a cup of coffee independently.

Blind Services Stimulus Grant

By Chad Ingram

IMPACT CIL now offers a new computer skills class for individuals with vision impairments. Jeff Urioste and Chad Ingram were hired in Nov. 2009 to teach the class. The instructions focus on using magnification and speech software that allow people with visual impairments to use a computer.

"The class has given me keys to a new life."

Currently, there are 14 individuals taking advantage of the 1-on-1 training. One student taking the class said, "The class has given me

keys to a new life." The class has already had one graduate, and several others are on their way. The class is free, so sign up and get started today.

Aging and Disability Resource Center

By Kathy Stiles, ILS

IMPACT CIL has joined with many other service providers to link with Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), which was created to help seniors, people with disabilities, caregivers and family members



locate resources and services that meet their needs. The goal is to make it easier to serve people by having a network of service providers with various skills and information. A reasonable accommodation to allow people with

disabilities to take part in a program, service or activity. For example, this means, ADRC can provide information about sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, if it is a wheelchair accessible location, or if a person needs enlarged print materials.



TRIVIA NIGHT 2010
 "LET'S PLAY BALL!"
 Hosted by IMPACT CIL



WHEN: Saturday, April 24, 2010
 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
 (doors open at 6:15 p.m.)

WHERE: IMPACT's East Room
 2751 E. Broadway
 Aptos, CA 95022

Come checked out in your favorite baseball team t-shirt!

Prize for the 1st place team!

Cost is \$120.00 per table or \$15.00 per person -

Maximum of 8 per table.

Call IMPACT to reserve your table @ 462-1411 ext. 325.

BYOB - snacks & soda will be provided!

Reasonable accommodations are available upon request.

Sign Language Interpreters will be available.

CANCELLED
Look for our
Auction/Luncheon
Event in the Fall!

50-50
 Raffle
 Attendance
 Prizes!

SB2516—Hearing Aid Coverage by Insurance **By Angela Botz, ILS/Deaf Services**

The cost of hearing aids is often cited as the primary reason for people with hearing loss not purchasing hearing aids; however, they know hearing aids will help them hear and lead a better life. Due to the cost, combined with a lack of insurance coverage, many are left behind not able to develop listening abilities or use spoken language.

Unfortunately for a lot of Americans, the cheaper drugstore and Internet hearing aids are their only option. Most insurance companies view hearing loss as the normal process of aging, so they don't cover hearing aids, nor does Medicare. If a hearing aid needs repairs it can cost \$175 to \$500 to get fixed, or if it dies, most people cannot afford to get a new hearing

aid. To have a hearing aid means "freedom". It is about being able to hear and to appreciate life by enjoying the sounds of nature, conversations, and even music. That is why the insurance companies should pay for hearing aid repairs or

Unfortunately for a lot of Americans, the cheaper drugstore and Internet hearing aids are their only option.

new hearing aids if we need it.

We are pushing to have Senate Bill 2516—Hearing Aid Coverage by Insurance to pass! We need your help to call your local legislator to co-sponsor this bill! Please mention that hearing aids are

a necessity! If you do not know who your local legislator is, please call Angela at 618-208-1146.

If you have facebook, you can join our cause, "Hearing Aids Should Be Covered By Insurance". You can voice your concerns, read the latest comments or news, and join the rally!

PLEASE HELP US BE ABLE TO AFFORD HEARING! We can't do it without your help!

It's My L.I.F.E. Living In Freedom and Equality

Do you want more control over your life?
Do you want to learn about self-directed supports?
Do you want to make changes in the way Illinois provides services to people with developmental disabilities?

Come to the It's My L.I.F.E. Celebration!

Wednesday, May 26, 2010
9:30 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
(lunch is included)
IMPACT's East Room
2751 E. Broadway
Alton, IL 62002

Reserve your spot today for this exciting event by contacting Jennifer Knapp at 217-714-6558 or jen@realchoiceinillinois.org.

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Mission Statement

IMPACT CIL promotes pride and respect for people with disabilities by sharing the tools that are necessary to take control on one's own life. IMPACT CIL advocates full community participation, with supports, of all citizens.

We're on the Web!
www.impactcil.org

**Please remember IMPACT
in your charitable giving
and estate planning.**



Proud member of

United Way
of Greater St. Louis



***Peer Support and Disability Rights
Since 1985***
