

On Target

Informing Indiana About
Disability Issues

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On Target is a monthly publication of the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities.

We welcome your suggestions for newsletter content and ideas concerning the actions of the Council. *On Target* is made available in accessible formats upon request.

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Indiana's legislature adjourns *sine die*

The legislative session is over, and Indiana lawmakers worked until the wee hours of April 29 to finalize this year's legislation *sine die*, which is Latin for without fixing a day for future action or meeting.

Perhaps the most important bill passed was House Bill 1001, the state budget. The two-year, \$26 billion budget passed by party line vote in the House and a vote of 41-9 in the Senate. The final version of the budget includes money for 5 percent Medicaid growth as well as allocation of funds from the closure of Fort Wayne State Developmental Center and Silvercrest Children's Development Center. The savings will be used to expand home- and community-based services. CHOICE program funds were also preserved.

The Centers for Independent Living received an additional appropriation of \$2.5 million this year. They started the session with a small appropriation that would have forced three centers to close; fortunately, the new funding will allow the continuation of their programs. Public funding for mass transportation also received a lift — approximately \$7 million per year will be added to the Mass Transportation Fund.

Other budget highlights include:

- \$1 million for a pilot of an Endangered Adult Guardianship Program to help people with

developmental disabilities receive guardianship services.

- Mental Health and Addiction Services received a 4 percent increase, which is approximately \$5 million more per year for badly needed services.
- Best Buddies received an appropriation of \$500,000 over the next two years.
- ATTAIN will continue to receive their annual appropriation of \$333,000.

State lawmakers also approved House Bill 1678, Gov. Mitch Daniels' health insurance package, and a 44-cent per pack cigarette tax hike to pay for it. The plan will bring insurance to an estimated 200,000 Hoosiers who don't have it, by giving employers a tax credit for offering insurance and by creating medical savings accounts to pay for basic preventive care. The House approved by a vote of 70-29, just two months after the chamber overwhelmingly rejected a smaller tax hike. The Senate's vote was 37-13. The bill will also ensure mental health and substance abuse parity in the new package for the uninsured.

Updates on other important bills:

- **House Bill 1428** — Autism and Asperger's Training for School Personnel. Bill signed by the Governor.
- **House Concurrent Resolution 40** — Urging Congress to Reevaluate "No Child Left Behind." Resolution passed by the House and Senate.
- **Senate Bill 94** — Individuals with Disabilities, "People First Language." Bill signed by the Governor.
- **Senate Concurrent Resolution 91** — Recognition of Centennial of Indiana 1907 Eugenical Sterilization Law. Resolution passed by the House and the Senate.
- **Senate Bill 150** — Extends the Quality Advisory Committee for two years to help implement appropriate open access for mental health medications. Bill signed by the Governor.

"On Target" survey provides updated

information

From mid-February until the end of March, "On Target" readers were encouraged to submit their opinions of the publication through a readership survey. The survey, which was mailed with the February issue, received 122 responses, or a 2.2 percent return rate.

Interesting findings include:

- 81 percent of respondents have received "On Target" for five or more years.
- 88 percent of respondents are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the article content, and 91 percent think article length is "just right."
- 94 percent think "On Target" is an important source for information about disability issues.
- 53 percent of respondents are not interested in receiving "On Target" as an electronic newsletter rather than a printed version, and 19 percent are not sure. Only 28 percent would like to receive an electronic version.
- Preferred subject matter was fairly equally divided, with no distinct majority favoring one subject over another.
- 74 percent of respondents were 45 or older, and 76 percent were women.
- 58 percent of respondents had an education level of undergraduate degree or above.

Based on these results, the Governor's Council will continue to produce a printed version of "On Target," supplementing it with the Council E-news when timely information needs to be distributed. Thank you to everyone who took time to share their feedback.

To subscribe to the Council's E-news, e-mail Christine Dahlberg at cdahlberg@gpcpd.org.

Planning fun, accessible vacations

Fun, accessible vacations are becoming easier to plan, thanks to the many resources available to people with disabilities. Internet research and travel agencies can help uncover options for the

whole family.

Web sites such as www.makoa.org/travel.htm and www.sath.org (Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality) offer many resources for people with disabilities, including a list of accessible U.S. bed and breakfasts; cities and countries with accessibility-specific Web sites; and lists of books, brochures and access guides to accessible destinations. The Web site for Access-Able Travel Source, www.access-able.com, also includes phone numbers for accessibility representatives at cruise lines and hotels.

Visiting a U.S. national park this summer? It is easy to find accessibility information at www.nps.gov. First, choose your park, click on "Plan Your Visit" and "Things to Know Before You Come." Listed under that tab is a link to accessibility information for each national park. If you don't have time or the ability to do your own research, several travel agencies such as the following have experts who specialize in planning vacations for people with disabilities and can arrange group tours or individual itineraries.

- **Accessible Journeys**, (800) 846-4537 (toll free), www.disabilitytravel.com. Travel resources, equipment rentals and a travel-companion service if needed.

- **Flying Wheels Travel**, (507) 451-5005 (toll free), www.flyingwheelstravel.com. Individual and escorted worldwide tours and customized itineraries for travelers with disabilities whose companions do not have disabilities.

- **Nautilus Tours & Cruises Ltd.**, (818) 591-3159 (voice), www.nautilustours.com. Air and train reservations, hotels, rental cars, tours and cruises (domestic and international), along with escort tours and cruises for people with physical disabilities, their families and friends.

For more information on accessible travel, call the Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality at (212) 447-7284 (voice).

Former Council board member wins award

Paula Guzzo, former Governor's Council board member and advocate for people with disabilities, won one of three Jefferson Awards given by Leadership Evansville and "The Evansville Courier & Press" on April 19.

As a parent of a child with multiple disabilities, Guzzo has advocated for education and community inclusion for more than 20 years and is currently a parent advocate, trainer, consultant and regional program specialist for IN*SOURCE, the Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs.

"Life is a journey. We control as much as we can that happens to us," Guzzo said to the "Evansville Courier & Press." "Our attitude is so important on how we deal with these things. In my advocacy, attitude is one of the hardest things I come up against because you can't buy it, and you can't legislate it. It has to come from within a person." The 12th annual Leadership Evansville Leadership Awards and Jefferson Awards recognize individuals, organizations, projects, businesses and institutions for community leadership. For more information, visit www.leadershivevansville.org.

Eugenics anniversary acknowledges dark chapter in Indiana history

State recognizes passing of first sterilization law 100 years ago

A century ago, Indiana adopted the first eugenical sterilization law in the world. According to the misguided theory of eugenics, those with below-average intelligence, criminal tendencies, physical impairments or who are impoverished should not have children. Although the word "eugenics" carries multiple meanings, most think of it as the study of hereditary improvement of the human race by controlled selective breeding.

In 1907, Indiana passed a law that provided for involuntary sterilization "to prevent procreation of confirmed criminals, idiots, imbeciles and rapists." Over time, similar laws in 30 other states and approximately a dozen countries, including Nazi Germany, were adopted.

In addition, Indiana established a state-funded Committee on Mental Defectives that carried out eugenic family studies in more than 20 counties and was home to an active "better babies" movement that encouraged scientific motherhood and infant hygiene as routes to human improvement.

During this period of time, Indiana was one of the leaders in the "improvement of the human race." Although proponents of eugenics at the time considered their work humanitarian, we today would find them drastic and inhumane.

Although Indiana's law was found unconstitutional in 1921, it was reinstated in 1927 and repealed again in 1974. While in force, the law resulted in the involuntary sterilization of nearly 2,500 people in Indiana and approximately 65,000 people total in states operating under eugenics laws. Mississippi's law still exists.

To acknowledge the 100-year anniversary of Indiana's Compulsory Sterilization Law, the "Indiana Eugenics: History and Legacy" symposium, held April 12, featured Jamie Coleman, a young woman who was sterilized in 1971 at age 15 without her knowledge because her mother felt it was in her best interest. At the time of surgery, her mother told her she was having an appendectomy.

"Eugenics has long occupied a frightening place in the history of medicine and science, from the Nazi death camps to the maltreatment of patients with mental disorders. We are only now beginning to study state-sponsored eugenics programs in the U.S.; what we learn from the past will help society make better decisions about how best to use the power of science for the good of humanity in the future," said Eric M.

Meslin, Ph.D., in a symposium news release. Meslin is the director of the Indiana University Center for Bioethics and assistant dean for bioethics at the Indiana University School of Medicine.

A free exhibit at the Indiana State Library chronicles this dark time in our state's history. "Fit to Breed? The History and Legacy of Indiana Eugenics, 1907-2007" runs through August 2007. These recent events are helping Indiana acknowledge its eugenics past with the hope that learning from history will help avoid repeated mistakes. A number of other states have done the same. In fact, the 2007 Indiana General Assembly passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 91, which recognizes the centennial of the law and expresses regret for Indiana's involvement with eugenics.

New trail now open for people with disabilities

Spring Mill State Park in Mitchell dedicated a newly restored section of trail in conjunction with Disability Awareness Month during a ceremony March 31. Project design took approximately two years, followed by nine months of construction. The total cost of the project was \$210,000. The improved design is part of a larger project addressing trail accessibility issues at Spring Mill, Clifty Falls and McCormick's Creek state parks. Phase two at Spring Mill will begin this summer with the expansion of the accessible surface leading to Donaldson Cave.

"This will provide an opportunity for people with disabilities, parents with strollers, children with grandparents and others to experience the solitude of a peaceful stream without the barriers of rocks, roots and severe slopes found on rugged trails," said Ric Edwards, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance director for the Department of Natural Resources. "When I was first injured, I was afraid I would never be able to

enjoy such an experience again. Thanks to the work of Spring Mill staff, this dream has again become reality."

For more information on Spring Mill State Park, please call Mark Young, property manager, at (812) 849-4129 (voice). For more information on accessible trails around the state, please call Ric Edwards at (317) 232-4145 (voice).

Conference theme announced

The 2007 Indiana Conference for People with Disabilities, "Disability Matters: We're 54,000,000 Strong," will be held Wednesday, Nov. 28 and Thursday, Nov. 29, at the Hyatt in downtown Indianapolis. Look to future editions of "On Target" for more information.

Of Note

Hoosiers do well in Mini-Marathon

Several Hoosiers participated in this year's OneAmerica 500 Festival Mini-Marathon male wheelchair category. Indiana racers included: Butch Martin — 53:02 (Fishers); Joshua Swoverland — 59:07 (Avon); Gary Baker — 1:05:58 (Indianapolis); Ben Hulin — 1:56:12 (Brookston); Kurtis Schnepf — 3:07:42 (Columbus); Chris Dennis — 3:07:51 (Muncie); and William Lange — 3:14:10 (Logansport).

Deadline extended for Community Spirit Awards

The deadline for nominations for the Council's Community Spirit Awards has been extended to July 1. The Distinguished Leadership Awards recognize one person with a disability and one parent or guardian of a child with a disability who are honored for extraordinary contributions to disability advocacy. Exceptional Disability

Awareness Month campaigns will be recognized with two awards, one that recognizes an individual and one that recognizes a group/organization whose exemplary DAM campaign has changed attitudes and enhanced the perception and value of people with disabilities. Nomination forms can be found on the Council's Web site at www.in.gov/gpcpd.

DAM evaluation winners announced

Congratulations to the following people, whose names were drawn from among those who submitted Disability Awareness Month 2007 evaluation forms. The Council relies on feedback from the evaluation forms to plan future Disability Awareness Month campaigns. Those chosen were Aaron Huck, Jacobs Village (Evansville); Rick Marshall, North Knox High School (Bicknell); Cindy Mattingly, Silver Creek Elementary School (Sellersburg); Chris Osika, Forest Ridge Academy (Schererville); and Kari Stutzman-Tuttle (South Bend).

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