

Newsletter
Autumn 2013

Networks

Supported Living Services

www.enableinc.org/networks.html

Inside This
Issue:

Front Cover:
Updates!!

Pg 2: The
Voice Behind
the Mic

Pg 3: Words of
Wisdom

Pg 3: JCCGB
Outings

Pg 4:
Rebuilding
Boston

Pg 6: Meet
new case
managers!

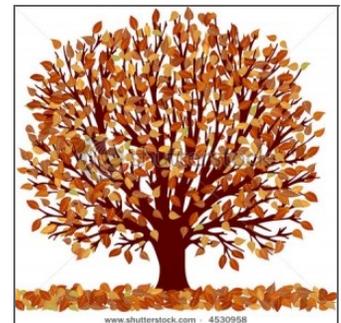
Pg 9:
Networks
Helps ICI

Pg 10: Thank
you!

Hey everyone! Networks is excited to put out the second edition of the newsletter. My name is Jamey Breen and I have interned here the past few months and have enjoyed working with you all. It has been awesome getting everybody involved and I would like to say thank you to all the consumers who contributed to this newsletter. There were so many exciting things that happened here at Networks over the past summer months. It was amazing to see all the individual talent that every one of you possess. I'm grateful that I have had the privilege to get to know some of you during my time here, which was probably one of the most rewarding parts of my job!

There are a lot of new and exciting changes which happened and we are very excited to make you a part of it. We are happy to announce that there had been some changes within the company as we wish the best of luck to our outgoing case managers as they pursue new and engaging opportunities. We are grateful for the time they had spent with us and we wish them luck in all their future endeavors. We also welcome five new case managers into the Networks family.

We are excited to have them as part of the team, so we can continue to serve you. As an organization, we strive to help you continue to lead independent and successful lives as individuals. In this issue of the newsletter you will find articles written by consumers sharing their personal stories. You'll get a firsthand look at some of their talents, passions and even some advice on what it's like to live with a disability. This is a great opportunity for us to get to know each other better and come together as a community. All of us have amazing stories that should be heard! Hope you enjoy reading!



The Voice Behind the Mic

By: Andrew Dufault

What is the meaning of life? Better yet, what is the meaning of life without passion? For 25-year-old Andrew Dufault of Fall River Massachusetts, that passion is radio. His radio station entitled *Wheels of Life Radio* runs from his apartment. It was started with the help of his cousin John with nothing more than a laptop and a microphone. Their Internet radio show streams 24 hours a day. The current growth of his radio station is due to hard-working dedication to his craft. It was not always easy keeping it going but through inspiration from his cousin John and others around him, Andrew kept it going. He's excited to announce that after a short reconstruction of his website he re-launched his newly improved radio show on July 4th.

In life, everybody has at least one activity that they use as an outlet to relieve stress. When Andrew steps behind the microphone he feels as though he is in a different world. "There's nothing like the feeling of broadcasting live" however, he does not only do this for himself. He also does this for his viewers, in the hopes that it will motivate others to find what they are passionate about, and in the process have enough motivation to make it happen. He believes that "Anything is possible with hard work and motivation." Through the use of his daily radio station, Andrew has the power to influence, inspire and motivate many of his listeners.

He uses the radio as a vehicle to deliver his message and offer advice to people in need. Throughout the daily chatter on the airways some topics include: having a positive attitude while overcoming a disability, "A disability is not a disadvantage, it makes you stronger in other areas of life". Due to a full time job opportunity his cousin John has, he unfortunately cannot help out as much with the radio station. Andrew now operates the station on his own and is looking for people to assist him.

If you are interested in tuning in or helping out you can listen live at wheelsoflife.com and contact him at 508-617-5171. Andrew's story is one of inspiration and one that all of us should take the time to hear. His passion and dedication is undeniable and if he continues to work hard he will be the voice that inspires us all!

Listen Live @ wheelsofliferadio.com



Words of Wisdom

By: John Mariani

My name is John Mariani, I graduated Massachusetts Hospital School in 2011. I have now been living on my own for a year and a half, with the help from personal care assistants (PCA) through Networks Supported Living in Canton, Massachusetts. Throughout my experiences utilizing personal care assistance in the past and present, I have seen both the good and bad side of depending on another person for my care.

First, I would like to talk about my good experiences. Throughout the week I appreciate that my PCAs have been especially accommodating and working around my schedule. For instance, if I need to get up earlier they have been very dependable coming in early in the morning to get me ready and up for the day so I do not miss my appointments. For the most part I feel very fortunate to have such dependable PCAs.

On the contrary, I have had some negative experiences. For instance PCAs have had issues showing up on time for the shifts. Unfortunately, this has caused me to have problems physically and also prevented me from accomplishing my goals throughout the day. At times this can be very frustrating because it limits my independence. When things like this happen I remind my PCAs the importance of being punctual and reliable.

As an independent individual it's important to be a strong self advocate and let people know what my needs are. Communication is one of the most important aspects of the consumer/PCA relationship. For the most part, I feel very lucky because the good outweighs the bad when it comes to PCAs. I feel very fortunate to have Networks Supported Living as a nice support system and I am very thankful for the services they provide.



LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING NEW PEOPLE??

The Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston has social programs for adults with mild to moderate differing abilities. Their mission is to 'advance the aspirations of families and individuals to enrich their lives, bodies and spirits, by providing the best in contemporary pro-

grams and experiences, informed by Jewish values for today's Jews and the people in their lives'¹. The activities meet year round and are open to all faiths.

South Area

Youth Adult Social Group is a program for adults ages 18 to 30 who have mild to moderate differing abilities. They meet one Monday evening each month from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Cooking, bowling, craft projects and going out to dinner are a few of the activities. They either meet at Brockton Area Multi-Services (BAMSI) in Stoughton or out in the community². The fee for the program is \$25 per Monday. Scholarships are also available for those in need.

South Area Adult Social Group is a program for adults over the age of 30 who have mild to moderate differing abilities. They meet one Monday evening each month from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Cooking, bowling, craft projects and going out to eat are a few of the activities. They either meet at BAMSI in Stoughton or out in the community. The fee for the program is \$25 per Monday. Scholarships are also available for those in need.

Metrowest Area

Metrowest Adult Activity Group is a program for adults with moderate differing abilities. They meet one Sunday afternoon each month from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Bowling, mini-golf, shopping and going out to eat are a few of the

activities. All activities are out in the community. The fee for the program is \$25 per Sunday. Scholarships are also available for those in need.

Metrowest Adult Social Group is a program for adults with mild disabilities. They meet one Sunday afternoon each month from 5:00pm to 7:00 pm. Going to plays, bowling, mini-golf and going out to dinner are a few of the activities. The fee for the program is \$25 per Sunday. Scholarships are also available to those in need.

For more information about any of these programs, please contact Janis Robbins, Coordinator of Special Needs Services of Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston³.

Janis Robbins

jrobbins@jccgb.org

617-558-6507

Rebuilding Boston

By: Jamey Breen

This past summer, I was lucky enough to take part in a program with the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD)⁴. It's located on Portland Street in Boston across from one of my favorite places in the entire world; the TD Garden, home of the Boston Celtics. The goal of the Institute is to redesign places in Boston to make them more ac-

cessible for people with all disabilities. This summer our main project was to do a complete audit of the Freedom Trail.

The Freedom Trail organization hired the Institute to critically analyze them and provide recommendations and advice ⁵. This allows them to better understand how they can be more accommodating to their visitors who may have a wide range of disabilities.

Throughout the summer we visited several spots along the tour including the old North Church, Paul Revere's house and Faneuil Hall. Each of the three spots

along the trail had several areas in which they could improve the accessibility for everyone. Now we are in the process of compiling our findings in order to present to the Freedom Trail board, they will then take our recommendations to make the necessary changes to accommodate their visitors.

Throughout this experience I have learned what it takes to get something done. What do I mean by that? If you really want to see the accessibility of something like the Freedom Trail improve, you need to have a group of people working together to achieve a common goal. Instead of pointing out their flaws and criticizing them, a better solution is to give realistic and thoughtful recommendations that will not only make it accessible for

those with disabilities but for everyone.

Although making these changes will cost them money and time to do the construction, our design team sees it as a worthwhile investment for the Freedom Trail. I feel this is because it will make the experience much more enjoyable for everyone who decides to visit historical city of Boston and witness the history it has to offer.

I am very thankful to the Institute for providing me this opportunity to work on such a meaningful project. I am sure it will make a difference in the lives of many people who wish to walk or roll along Boston's Freedom Trail.

BOSTON

After these changes, hopefully thanks to our efforts as a team we will have made a difference. Lastly throughout my times spent with the institute, I truly felt valued and appreciated as part of the team, the architects at the Institute helping us with this project saw our insights and something special that not anybody could provide.

When you have a group of people with varying disabilities it offers a unique perspective. I feel this is a job that actually requires somebody living with a disability to get it done right. You can't expect anyone off the street to be able to do a project like this and it's definitely not something you can learn in a book. I believe that's what makes this project special to me.

Meet Lindsey!

Hi everyone I just wanted to take a second to introduce you to our newest case manager Lindsey Wilson! She's a graduate of Brandeis University as of May 2013. She's very excited to start working with all of you and I know you will love her because she's pretty awesome. She double majored in Psychology and Women Gender Studies, what makes her the perfect fit for the job is that she's very willing and open to talk to all of you and help in any way that she can. In talking with Lindsey, I found out that her mother also has a disability. This gives her a very unique perspective upon which to draw from when dealing with personal healthcare issues. This is the type of work that she's very passionate about, mostly because of her experiences helping her mother. She will be a great new addition to our team and we are really lucky to have her a part of the Networks SL team!



Meet Tamami!



Hi everyone the second of our new case managers is Tamami Kataoka, She graduated from Wheelock College with a degree in Social Work this past year. She chose this profession because she believes in supporting and helping people in any way she can. She wanted a rewarding job and this provided a great professional opportunity. She says she loves people and can not wait to start working with all of you! Before she started working here at Networks, she spent three weeks post graduation in Africa teaching children and learning the culture. She says was a great experience. As long as she has caffeine to keep her going, she will be a great addition to the Networks SL team and we are happy and lucky to have her on board!

Meet Katia!

Hi everyone, I'd like to introduce Katia, our third new case managers! She graduated with a B.A. degree in Women Studies from University of New Hampshire. She further pursued her Master's in Health Care Management at Cambridge College. Katia has a lot of experience working with the aging population at different facilities. From working with clients, she has gained many attributes and insights such as being an active listener, being attentive to people and also respect. In meeting with Katia, I found that she feels strongly that it's important to know each client is a unique individual and has different needs. She chose this profession because she is an amiable people person and when she works with people it is right in her comfort zone. 'Feels like home' she notes. We are lucky to have Katia on our Networks SL team!



Meet Colleen!

I'd like to introduce you all to Colleen, one of our new case managers! She graduated with a B.A. in Sociology and Human Development Studies from University of Vermont in 2009. She has a lot of knowledge and insight in community resources and outreach. In talking with Colleen, she told me that her sister has a disability and she developed a passion from helping her sister. Colleen's experience puts her in a perfect position for helping others find independence. She is friendly and ambitious; she is in training for a half marathon in April! She also enjoys salsa and ballroom dancing, her variety in hobbies makes her very well rounded. We welcome her as she will be a great addition to the Networks SL team!



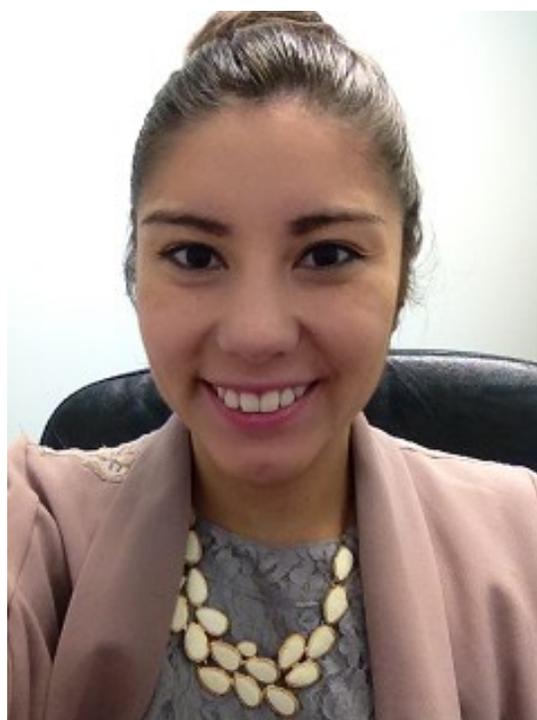
Meet Tabitha!



Let me introduce you all to Tabitha, one of our new case manager! She graduated from Louisiana Tech University in 2007 with a B.A. in Sociology. Tabitha is currently going to Assumption College for Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling for her Master's Degree. She has previously worked at other professional organizations and realized she has a passion for helping others. She entered this career field wanting to make a difference and improve the lives of people with disabilities. She is looking forward to start meeting and working with all of you. She starts her day with a cup of coffee and a welcoming personality; she is really easy to speak with. Tabitha would love to get to know all better and will definitely be a great addition to the Networks SL team!

Meet Stephanie!

Hi everyone I would like to introduce Stephanie, who has recently started interning here. Currently she's a full time student at Bridgewater State University wrapping up a double major in both Psychology and Sociology with a minor in Asian Studies. She has had the opportunity to study abroad in Hong Kong and visit South East Asian countries. She says it was a great experience and she loves learning about new cultures. Stephanie previously interned at the Boston Higashi School for children with Autism and currently work with people with disabilities in the community at WORK Inc. She is looking forward to meeting everyone and collaborating to continue Enable Inc. to grow and succeed. Greetings! If you have any questions or have ideas for future newsletter articles, please feel free to email her at networksintern@enableinc.org.



Networks Helps the ICI Collect Health Care Stories

Networks is collaborating with the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at UMass Boston ⁶. The ICI is looking for people with disabilities to share their negative and positive health care experiences. Their stories will become part of Inclusive Health Care, a disability-awareness training for hospitals ⁷.

Inclusive Health Care is a 30-minute video that teaches medical personnel better ways to communicate with their patients with disabilities. The training also includes additional resources, such as these health care stories, which will be in both written and video form. The ICI is selling the Inclusive Health Care training to hospitals in Massachusetts, throughout New England, and nationally.

Anya Weber, a copywriter and editor at the ICI, reached out to Networks to see if any consumers would like to share their health care stories. “These first-hand accounts are really valuable,” says Weber. “It’s powerful for doctors and nurses to hear about the issues people with disabilities encounter when they go to the hospital. We want to teach health professionals about effective ways to communicate with all their patients, including those with disabilities” ⁸.

The ICI has existed since the 1960s. It is part of a national network of research centers created by President John F. Kennedy: University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. The mission of these centers has since expanded to include all forms of disability.

In addition to Inclusive Health Care, the ICI is involved in many other areas of advocacy, research, and training. Their projects promote inclusion in employment, education, health care, and community life. Their mission as an organization is to break down barriers that prevent the involvement of people with disabilities in all areas of life. ICI staff believe that disability should be no reason why an individual is held back from reaching their full potential.

Networks staff are looking forward to collaborating further with the ICI. Sharing our stories could potentially be very influential in opening the minds of medical professionals who get the chance to view the Inclusive Health Care video. If you have a story to share about your experiences with disability and health care, please contact Anya Weber at the ICI: anya.weber@umb.edu

Thank you!



I want to thank Jeff Dougan, our guest speaker at the Summer Consumer Council for a great presentation!! He has given each of you your own Emergency Go Pack which will be delivered to you if you were not able to attend the meeting on August 7th. Thank you to everyone who helped make the newsletter a success! All of you have unique talents, abilities and ambitions in your lives. Never let your disability be the reason why you don't succeed in life! Over my time interning here at Networks, I have seen potential in all of you to follow your dreams and do great things. You only

live once, so live life to the fullest and have no regrets! It has been a privilege to get to know most of you during my time as Networks Summer Intern!

Upon request this Newsletter can be emailed to you in for use with assistive technology

Networks Supported Living Services

Aspiring to provide individuals and families with the means, opportunity and power to develop their full potential in the community.



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www.facebook.com/NetworksSupportedLiving

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All individuals mentioned or shown have given their consent to be displayed in this newsletter