



ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT FIRST UPDATE 5/5/17

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1. FEATURED RESOURCES

- Launch of the Employment Rights Helpline

New initiative seeks to enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities



Today, Equip for Equality launched an exciting initiative called the Employment Rights Helpline.

The Helpline is a new, free, statewide service to provide people with disabilities with legal rights information and advice, as well as self-advocacy assistance to help them navigate employment issues that arise.

The concept of the Employment Rights Helpline was an outgrowth of ADA 25 Chicago, a year-long initiative launched by The Chicago Community Trust that inspired hundreds of partner organizations to leverage the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act by expanding inclusion in the Chicago region. The Trust is also the primary funder of the Employment Rights Helpline.

Historically, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities has been significantly higher than that for the general population making the need for an Employment Rights Helpline especially critical.

To access the Helpline, people with disabilities can call toll-free: 1-844-RIGHTS-9 (or 1-844-744-7489) and a trained attorney will respond to the call. People with disabilities can also email the Helpline at employment@equipforequality.org.

Helpline staff can:

- Discuss legal rights under the ADA
- Answer employment rights questions
- Assist with reasonable accommodation requests
- Help understand options
- Share fact sheets, sample letters and forms

Building on its successful Special Education Clinic Helpline, Equip for Equality will be reaching out to the private bar for pro bono assistance with the Employment Rights Helpline. It is anticipated that pro bono attorney participation will exponentially expand the Helpline's capacity, allowing Equip for Equality to assist many more people with disabilities.

For more information contact:

Barry C. Taylor at 312-895-7317, barryt@equipforequality.org

Rachel Weisberg at 312-895-7319, rachelw@equipforequality.org

Information about the Helpline can be found on-line at: www.equipforequality.org/employment

- **New Card Helps Disabled Individuals Communicate with Police in Stressful Situations**

[Kristen Thometz](#) | April 11, 2017 12:34 pm

Like most parents teaching their children to drive, Aurora resident Lori Price had some advice for her son, Colin.

“As a parent, you correct your kids and tell them, ‘You didn’t make a complete stop, or you’re going over the speed limit,’” Price said.

As Price was correcting Colin during one of their driving lessons, he began to argue with her. Not as a form of teenage rebellion, Price said, but because in his mind he believed he was right.

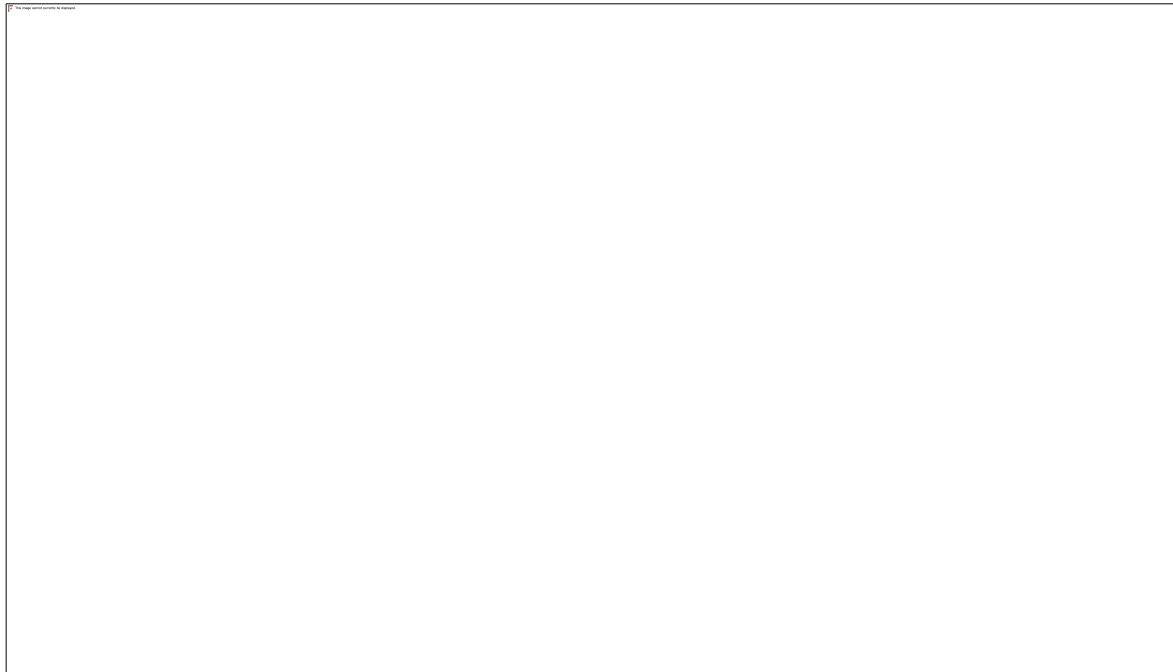
“It came to me that if he were stopped by a police officer ... an argument might ensue” because law enforcement officials may not be familiar with how people with autism, like Colin, process and respond to information, Price said.

“If you and I were pulled over by police, it’s a stressful situation but we can talk through that and we know what we need to do and how to communicate effectively and coherently,” she said. “He may shut down. He may not know what to say.”

Concerned that law enforcement officials may misinterpret Colin’s silence or self-stimulatory behavior – such as clapping – Price reached out to Illinois Rep. Stephanie Kifowit, D-Oswego, to see if the state could create a disability awareness card that could be used to prevent a situation from escalating unnecessarily.

“During this time there seems to be miscommunication with police officers and offenders, [and things] could escalate quickly,” Price said.

Kifowit [sponsored legislation that went into effect Jan. 1](#) creating an awareness card that people who have been medically diagnosed with an intellectual, developmental or mental disability can carry with them.



Document: [Read the card.](#) One side of the card states the person in possession of the card has a disability which may impair their “ability to communicate with others, especially strangers or in stressful situations.” The card also details some behaviors the person may exhibit.

“On the back of the card, there’s also an emergency contact name. If officers or first responders come into contact with an individual who is not responsive or agitated or is showing signs of nonconforming, they can call the number of the back of the card,” Kifowit said.

“And that person can come and assist officers or give them an idea of how to handle the

person. The whole point of the card is really to reduce any situation that could escalate unnecessarily.”

Price agrees.

“This is not a get out of jail free card. It’s not a pass. This just explains my behavior that I exhibit might be something you’re not familiar with,” Price said. “If they’re speeding, they’re speeding and should be ticketed for that but not for something else where it escalates.”

At the start of the year, 100,000 cards were distributed to Illinois Secretary of State offices statewide and were made available at no cost to individuals with disabilities [who fill out an application](#).

While 19-year-old Colin Price needs some more time behind the wheel before getting his license, Price is “relieved” that he will have this card with him.

“It’s a tremendous relief because my son has a hard time communicating, especially when he’s under pressure or stress,” Price said.

<http://chicagotonight.wttw.com/2017/04/11/new-card-helps-disabled-communicate-police-stressful-situations>

2. WEBINARS

FEATURED WEBINAR

- ***Improving Access to the Workforce through Innovative Mobility and Transportation Solutions***

Join us for an interactive Webinar on **Monday, May 22nd, 1:00-2:00 p.m. c.t.** with Judy Shanley, Ph.D. Asst. Vice-President, Education & Youth Transition, and Co-Director, the [National Center for Mobility Management](#). Judy will engage us in a discussion about overcoming transportation challenges to improve access to the workforce. In this Webinar you will have an opportunity to:

- Learn about mobility management and how you can leverage state and community resources
- Identify potential opportunities to participate and/or build mobility networks in your community
- Obtain resources from the National Center for Mobility Management
- Share strategies, successes, and challenges

About Judy

Judy Shanley, Ph.D. is the Vice President, Education and Youth Transition at the national office of Easterseals in Chicago, IL. She manages Federal projects, provides technical assistance, conducts research, and develops materials regarding accessible transportation, mobility management, and coordinated transportation. Shanley also oversees Easterseals national education and youth transition programs. She serves as a project director to several large national centers, funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Administration for Community Living, including the National Center for Mobility Management. Shanley supports FTA in their implementation of diverse healthcare access and mobility initiatives.

Prior to Easterseals, she worked at the U.S. Department of Education, where she wrote federal grants and monitored programs and institutions to ensure compliance with Federal regulations. Shanley led the Office of Special Education Programs national TA&D program evaluation and was instrumental in writing national priorities for the Office of Postsecondary Education related to access to higher education for students with intellectual disabilities. Before her Federal service, Shanley was a Principal Research Analyst at the American Institutes for Research where she managed a portfolio of grants and contracts. She earned her Ph.D. in Special Education from the University of Florida and an M.B.A. and a Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling, both from Syracuse University.

To join AT&T Connect Conference:

Click here: <https://connect17.uc.att.com/stateofil/meet/?ExEventID=87184372762&CT=W>

For dialing-in only:

1. Dial one of the numbers listed below
2. When prompted, enter the meeting access code: 7184372762#
 - * Caller-Paid number: 602-333-0052
 - * Toll-Free Number (in USA): 888-494-4032.
 - * Blackberry (Caller-Paid): 6023330052x7184372762#
 - * iPhone / Android (Caller-Paid): 6023330052,,7184372762#
 - * Windows Phone (Caller-Paid): <tel:6023330052,,7184372762#>,

- **[Overview of Life Choices](#)**

The link below contains a webinar titled *Overview of Life Choices*. This webinar is the first in a series and introduces you to upcoming changes regarding **Person Centered Planning**. The webinar was designed for all stakeholders in the Developmental Disability system and is for information purposes only. No Continuing Education Credits will be awarded.

Please feel free to share this or the companion pdf with others who may not have access.

To view the Webinar, click here <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6925994549886236417>

To view the PDF handout, click

here http://www.dhs.state.il.us/OneNetLibrary/27896/documents/By_Division/Division%20of%20DD/LifeChoices/OverviewLifeChoicesSeriesWebinar1042417.pdf

Thank you,

Life Choices

IDHS/Division of Developmental Disabilities

DHS.DDD.Life.Choices@illinois.gov

- **[Tools for Finding Disability and Rehabilitation Related Data](#)**

Date and Time: Tuesday, May 9th, 2017 2:00-3:00pm EDT

Research tools for exploring national-survey and administrative data.

Secondary datasets such as national surveys and administrative data are valuable resources for testing hypotheses and generating national-level statistics about disability and rehabilitation related-issues. Unfortunately, it can be difficult to identify what datasets are available and what data are most appropriate for addressing a specific research interest.

This presentation will introduce two innovative web-based resources designed to help researchers learn:

- What datasets related to disability and rehabilitation are out there?
- What topics are covered in each dataset?
- What are the dataset strengths and limitations?
- How do I access the datasets?
- How to link to the University of Michigan's Archive of Data on Disability to Enable Policy and Research ([ADDEP](#))

The [Rehabilitation Dataset Directory](#) is a browse-able/searchable database providing an overview, description, sample and other pertinent information for nearly 60 datasets. The [Rehabilitation Research Cross-dataset Variable Catalog](#) allows the exploration of variables organized by topics (including disability and health conditions, healthcare, health behaviors and more) simultaneously across 6 major datasets.

To register for this free webinar, please go to:

<http://www.edi.cornell.edu/register/index.cfm?event=6276>

- **[Employing Youth Adult Peer Support Workers](#)**

A Toolkit for Providers

This [University of Massachusetts Medical School Transitions to Adulthood Research and Training Center](#) webinar will discuss the factors that promote the success of young adult peers, and introduce for employers a new toolkit.

Thursday, May 11, 2017

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Online

More information and registration [here](#)

- **[Free SAMHSA Webinar: Get to Know Your National Technical Assistance Center](#)**

On May 16 at 2 p.m. ET, SAMHSA will host a free 90-minute webinar entitled *Get to Know Your SAMHSA-Supported National Consumer & Consumer-Supporter Technical Assistance Centers (NTACs)*. "What are they? What do they do? What can they do for you?...Discover your regional NTAC and meet the peer leaders; learn of the activities,

accomplishments and initiatives; and find out how your NTAC can support you and your organization to strengthen peer-provided mental health services.” To find the National Technical Assistance Center assigned to your state/territory and to learn each center’s national focus, [click here](#). To register, [click here](#).

- [Mentoring Youth in the Workplace](#)

This summer, youth will be entering the workplace through employment programs and internships. This webinar has been developed to support the managers of those youth and prepare them with effective mentoring and management practices that will positively impact youth and the business.

Wednesday, May 17, 2017
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Online

More information and registration [here](#)



- [Accessing Behavioral Health Services: Can Peer Support Help? Free Webinar on May 24](#)

On May 24 at 3 p.m. ET, Mathematica will host a free 90-minute webinar on *Accessing Behavioral Health Services: Can Peer Support Help?* “The webinar will discuss the findings from an evaluation of Health Care Innovation Awards (HCIA)-funded projects that focused on mental health services. Representatives from two of the projects will offer their perspectives on the peer role in their innovative service models and address the challenges, successful strategies, and benefits associated with incorporating peers into the workforce. The two HCIA sites represented in our discussion are the Center for Health Care Services (CHCS)—which provides integrated services to people who are homeless in San Antonio, Texas—and the Fund for Public Health in New York (FPHNY), which implemented crisis respite services that led to lower Medicaid costs and fewer hospitalizations.” For more information and to register, [click here](#).

Accessing Behavioral Health Services: Can Peer Support Help?

Wednesday, May 24, 3:00–4:30 p.m. (ET)

Register:

WEBINAR

In many places, a shortage of behavioral health professionals keeps people from getting help when they need it. To help solve this problem, more and more providers are integrating behavioral health services and primary care and hiring peer support specialists as important members of clinical teams. Since 2013, Mathematica has been evaluating the [Health Care Innovation Awards](#) (HCIA), a series of projects funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to test the effects of innovative practices on key outcomes including Medicaid and Medicare spending, hospitalizations, and emergency room visits. Some projects used peer support to enhance people’s access to behavioral health services.



On **May 24, from 3:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m.** (ET), Mathematica will host a webinar to discuss the findings from an evaluation of HCIA-funded projects that focused on mental health services. Representatives from two of the projects will offer their perspectives on the peer role in their innovative service models and address the challenges, successful strategies, and benefits associated with incorporating peers into the workforce. The two HCIA sites represented in our discussion are the Center for Health Care Services (CHCS)—which provides integrated services to people who are homeless in San Antonio, Texas—and the Fund for Public Health in New York (FPHNY), which implemented crisis respite services that led to lower Medicaid costs and fewer hospitalizations.

[Learn more about this event.](#)

Register:

WEBINAR

For more information, please contact events@mathematica-mpr.com.

MATHEMATICA
Policy Research



[SAMHSA Sponsors Webinar Series on Trauma-informed Innovations in Crisis Services](#)

SAMHSA’s monthly webinar series, sponsored by its National Center for Trauma-informed Care and Alternatives to Seclusion and Restraint, “will highlight the innovative work of crisis service providers employing a trauma-informed approach.” The series will take place through September 2017 on the fourth Monday of each month, 3 p.m.–4 p.m. ET. The first webinar, on April 24, covered *Safety: Common Ground*. Upcoming webinars include *Empowerment, Voice, and Choice: Pierce County Recovery Response Center* (May 22); *Peer Support: Freise Hope House* (June 26); and *Collaboration and Mutuality: Harbel Community Organization* (July 24). Two more webinars are planned. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

[Doors to Wellbeing to Host Free Webinar on the DBSA Leadership Center](#)

On May 30, at 2 p.m. ET, Doors to Wellbeing will host the latest webinar in its free monthly webinar series. The topic of the one-hour webinar will be *DBSA (Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance) Leadership Center: Online Resource for Peer Workforce and Organizations*. The presenters will be the DBSA director of programs, Mary Dean, and the DBSA vice president of chapters and programs, Ingrid Deetz. To register, [click here](#).

3. FINANCIAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION

- **On-line dialogue on the ABLÉ Act: The dialogue is open through **May 12, 2017****



The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act allows states to establish programs that offer tax advantaged savings accounts, known as ABLE accounts, to qualified individuals with disabilities.

The LEAD Center is holding an online dialogue, "**The ABLE Act: A Tool for Financial Stability and Employment Outcomes**," to help potential ABLE account owners, their families, and those who provide them with various supports and services to better understand and create plans for how these accounts can be used to assist youth and adults with disabilities in securing and maintaining competitive integrated employment.

Dialogue topics include how ABLE accounts can be used to support employment or self-employment/entrepreneurship, and how ABLE accounts can be used to increase economic empowerment and financial self-sufficiency.

The dialogue is open through **May 12, 2017**.

We hope you will take the time to join the online event at:
<http://leadcenter.epolicyworks.org/>.

- **Report Finds Adults with Disabilities Remain Outside the Economic Mainstream**

On April 25, the National Disability Institute (NDI) released a new report called *Banking Status and Financial Behaviors of Adults with Disabilities: Findings from the 2015 FDIC National Survey of Unbanked and Underbanked Households*. "The report finds that, in the 27 years since the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law, ensuring all individuals with

disabilities the opportunity to achieve ‘economic self-sufficiency,’ this population still faces numerous financial hurdles and roadblocks to financial inclusion,” the NDI writes. “Based on data mined from the 2015 FDIC *National Survey on Unbanked and Underbanked Households*, this insightful report highlights the financial choices and banking habits of adults with disabilities.” For more information and to download the report, [click here](#).

4. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1. “Government Funding Opportunity”

AGENCY: Department Health and Human Services

OFFICE: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

PROGRAM: Empowering Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities through Chronic Disease Self-Management

Estimated Number of Awards: 8

Anticipated Total Available Funding: \$6,413,619

Award Ceiling: \$900,000

Anticipated Award Amount: \$500,000

Application Due Date: May 12, 2017

Purpose of Areas: The Administration on Aging (AoA) within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) forecasts the possible availability of Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 funds to make three-year grants to approximately 6-8 entities to bring to scale and sustain evidence-based programs that empower older adults and adults with disabilities to better manage their chronic conditions. Goal 1: Significantly increase the number of older adults and adults with disabilities who participate in evidence-based self-management programs to empower them to better manage their chronic conditions; and Goal 2: Implement innovative funding arrangements (e.g. contracts with integrated health care systems) to support the CDSME programs beyond the grant period, while embedding the programs into an integrated, sustainable evidence-based prevention program network.

Who is Eligible to Apply:

Private institutions of higher education

Public and State controlled institutions of higher education

Independent school districts

Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

Special district governments

Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities

City or township governments

County governments

State governments

Link for Additional Information: [Empowering Older Adults](#)

2. Lloyd A. Fry Foundation Grant – Grants to Chicago Nonprofits for Employment Training, Education and Art Learning

<https://illinois.grantwatch.com/grant/176449/grants-to-chicago-illinois-nonprofits-for-employment-training-education-and-arts-learning.html>

3. VNA Foundation Grant – Grants to Chicago Area Nonprofits for Health Services to the Underserved
<https://illinois.grantwatch.com/grant/179304/grants-to-chicago-area-illinois-nonprofits-for-health-services-to-the-underserved.html>

5. FREE TRAINING AND FREE BOOKS!

IDHS On-Line Training in Grant Writing

Overview

This three part series is being delivered as on-line training by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of Grants Administration.

This training shows you how to effectively, find, write and submit proposals for federal, state, local, non-governmental, and private sector grants. If you want to learn the essentials of writing and acquiring grants, this three part series will help your agency.

Who Should Attend?

For no cost, the Illinois Department of Human Services, Office of Grants Administration continues to provide grant writing training to not for profit agencies, all government agency staff, staff of agencies under contract with any state agency in Illinois, and interested individuals.

Registration

Registration is now open. This is the season when funders are releasing funding announcements. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to register immediately as this training is on a first come first serve basis.

How to Register

[Register NOW for the 2017 classes](#), to insure that you are enrolled in one of the upcoming cycles during 2017. The registration will remain open until classes are filled. You will be notified by email as to the dates and times of your training.

Training Dates and Times

Once registration is closed, all enrollees will be notified of their training dates and time. There are three parts to each class. Each part is for one hour and thirty minutes. Instructions on how to enter the virtual classroom are sent to each enrollee prior to each class along with the training materials. If technical assistance is required, enrollees are given instructions on whom to contact. No costs are incurred by the provider because the student can participate at the work site by simply logging onto a computer and entering the virtual classroom.

Technical Requirements

You will need a PC with the following minimum technical requirements:

- Operating System: Windows 7
- Software: Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher
- Internet Connection

Objectives

Upon completion of the entire 3 part series, staff will:

- know how to research and find available grants;
- have tools that will help them with the planning and organizing required prior to the actual writing of a grant application;
- understand the fundamental elements of a grant proposal; and,
- learn how to prepare the narrative portion of the grant application including: 1) problem

statement, 2) goals and objectives, 3) program design/methodology, 4) logic model, 5) staffing and management plan, 6) organizational capacity, 7) evaluation plan, 8) budget, 9) sustainability plan, 10) abstract, and 11) supplemental documents.

Special Accommodations

The registration form addresses special accommodations. If they are required, every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the needs. It is imperative to immediately notify Denise.Eligan@illinois.gov if special accommodations are needed.

Questions

Please contact Denise Eligan, Bureau Chief, IDHS Office of Grants Administration at (312) 793-3599 or email at Denise.Eligan@illinois.gov .

- **Free Books**

Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation



Free Books, while supplies last (You Just Pay Shipping Costs)!

Boston University's Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation's Publications office is moving at the end of May, and due to lack of space, we need to find homes for our physical books. If you would like copies of any of our books, most of them will be free, while supplies last! You just pay shipping costs.

[View a list of our books, workbooks, and curricula](#) for this limited offer! **Offer expires Wednesday, May 24, 2017!**

Full descriptions of our products and samples to preview are on each product webpage.

<https://cpr.bu.edu/store>

For any questions, please contact Sue McNamara by e-mail at cprbooks@bu.edu or by phone at (617) 358-2574.

- **SAMHSA eBooks Are Available for Free Download**

Eight eBooks are now available from SAMHSA's Knowledge Application Program (KAP). "These digital resources can be downloaded at no cost to any device, including a Kindle, Nook, or tablet," SAMHSA writes. The books cover topics including *Managing Chronic Pain in Adults with or in Recovery from Substance Use Disorders; Spice, Bath Salts, and Behavioral Health; Gambling Problems: An Introduction for Behavioral Health Services Providers; Take Action Against Hepatitis C: For People in Recovery From Mental Illness or Addiction; People Recover;* and three versions of *Substance*

Abuse Treatment: Addressing the Specific Needs of Women, for different audiences. To download the eBooks, [click here](#).



Economic opportunities through rural entrepreneurship



Particularly in rural communities, entrepreneurs are the engines for job growth and with support can become anchors for community economic development. In March, FIELD Director Joyce Klein moderated [Supporting Entrepreneurial Economies](#), a panel discussion on the importance of entrepreneurs in rural areas, presented by the Aspen Community Strategies Group with the Rural

Development Innovation Group. [More](#).

Tomorrow's leaders in microbusiness



FIELD's Emerging Leaders in Microbusiness (ELM2) aims to attract and strengthen leaders to support the continued growth and vitality of microbusiness in the US. In April, ELM2 fellows met in New York City to discuss building skills to support creativity and strengthening the voices of clients and leaders in the microbusiness development field. ELM2 fellows met with Cathie Mahon of the National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions to discuss her leadership experiences. [More](#).

6. MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

Mental Health America is proud to have started [Mental Health Month](#) back in 1949 to raise

and family to do the same – there is no shame in caring for yourself.

STEP 6: [Visit your local MHA Affiliate and participate in their events!](#) Our affiliates are the backbone of what we do – providing support groups, counseling, peer warmlines, referral services, and more. Make sure you reach out and say THANK YOU! Find your affiliate here: www.mentalhealthamerica.net/find-affiliate

STEP 7: [Consider a gift!](#) Mental Health America’s life-changing work – including mental health’s largest awareness campaign of the year – is impossible without the support of compassionate individuals like you. [A single gift of \\$25, \\$50, or even \\$75](#) could help as many as 90 people get screened and connected to mental health programs, referrals, and services during Mental Health Month.

As always, THANK YOU for your advocacy!

**DOWNLOAD
THE FREE TOOLKIT**

- **Star-studded Video Series Combats the Prejudice Associated with Mental Health Conditions and Learning Disabilities**

For Mental Health Month (May), actors Emma Stone and Rachel Bloom, producer Brian Grazer, and other celebrities, including Lena Dunham, Jesse Eisenberg, Michael Phelps and Jay Leno, will share brief personal videos to raise mental health awareness, in the #MyYoungerSelf campaign sponsored by the Child Mind Institute. The videos, premiered daily over the course of the month, will include nearly three dozen actors, athletes, writers, politicians and fashion designers who will share their accounts of growing up with mental health issues or learning disorders, as well as childhood photos, and offer advice and hope to children dealing with similar issues across the globe. In a trailer for the campaign, one unidentified voice, accompanied by a childhood picture, says, “What I would tell my younger self is, you didn’t do anything wrong.” “You’re not the only one who feels this way—not by a longshot,” says another. And a third says, “I have depression but, look—talking to you, I feel better already.” For a different video every day in May, [click here](#). For more information and the preview, [click here](#). **Editor’s Note: It is important to exercise caution in seeking treatment of children for mental health conditions. For example, studies have shown that children are often given powerful psychotropic drugs with unintended consequences. For Still in a Crib, Yet Being Given Antipsychotics, [click here](#).**

**Register Today For These Special Mental Health
Awareness Month Virtual Forums**

- **VIRTUAL FORUM / Wednesday May 10, 2017 (12pm EST)
Dealing With Stigma In Mental Health: Are We Making Progress?**

VIRTUAL FORUM / Tuesday May 16, 2017 (12pm EST)
Integrated Care: Navigating The Evolving Health Care System In 2017

- **Community Psychiatry Forum on Ethical Issues in Community Mental Health**

A telephone forum on *Ethical Issues in Community Mental Health* will be held on May 4 at 11:45 a.m. ET. The forum is sponsored by the Center for Public Service Psychiatry of the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, in collaboration with the American Association of Community Psychiatrists. The discussion will include the past, present, and future of ethical challenges in the mental health field; how diagnostic eligibility criteria may create ethical dilemmas; how pharmaceutical influences may affect clinical practices and create conflicts of interest; and how psychiatrists' experience and training can help them navigate these challenges. To join the meeting, [click here](#), enter the meeting password (cpsp) and click "Join Now." Or join by phone: 415.655.0002, Access Code/Meeting No. 732 767 020.

- **Study Finds Mental Health Conditions Are More Common Than Expected**

Eight-three percent of the nearly one thousand participants in a recent study experienced some kind of mental health condition between childhood and middle age, researchers have reported. Just 171 of 988 participants, all New Zealanders, "experienced no anxiety disorders, depression or other mental ailments from late childhood to middle age," according to the study, published in the February 2017 *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*. Of the rest, half experienced a "transient" mental health condition. The remaining 408 individuals (41 percent) had "more severe conditions, such as bipolar and psychotic disorders," according to the researchers. The study indicated that "mentally healthy participants tended to possess advantageous personality traits starting in childhood...These participants rarely expressed strongly negative emotions, had lots of friends and displayed superior self-control." For more information, [click here](#).

- **Advocates: You Can Help Counties Cut Numbers of People with Mental Health Conditions in Jails**

Research estimates that approximately 15 percent of men and nearly one-third of women in jails have a serious mental health condition, according to the Vera Institute. The *Stepping Up Resources Toolkit* is designed to help counties reduce those numbers. "*Reducing the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jail: Six Questions County Leaders Need to Ask* serves as a blueprint for counties to assess their existing efforts to reduce the number of people with mental health conditions in jail by considering specific questions and progress-tracking measures. The report also informs the *Stepping Up* technical assistance that will be offered moving forward." For more information and to download the toolkit, [click here](#). For the Vera Institute's *Incarceration's Front Door: The Misuse of Jails in America*, [click here](#). For the 2017 *Stepping Up* technical assistance opportunities, [click here](#).

7. PEER SUPPORT

- A new public health website to help engage peers in treatment research:
www.PatientCenteredResearch.org

I am delighted to announce www.PatientCenteredResearch.org, which was developed via a grant from

the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to address the question, "How can peers be more fully and meaningfully engaged in research on treatments?" The website was designed to be used by peers, researchers, and funders.

Treatment research includes outcome trials to test therapies such as medication and counseling, as well as other clinical studies, for mental health, substance abuse, and physical illnesses.

Peers are increasingly recognized as an important asset in healthcare, typically via peer support. A *peer* is "a person who is similar in fundamental ways to the recipient of the support; their relationship is one of equality." Yet peers in healthcare have participated almost exclusively in the delivery of care rather than in research on such care.

The website can enhance peers' capacity to engage in all phases of treatment research, and researchers' ability to successfully involve peers.

Features of the website include:

- ② Video clips of peers, researchers, and funding agency representatives that speak to the importance of peers' involvement in research, as well as practical and emotional issues in peer engagement
- ② Educational webinars to improve peers' and researchers' capacity to work together
- ② The ability for researchers to post research projects on which they want peer involvement
- ② A searchable database for peers to locate such projects
- ② A mentorship database in which anyone can offer phone / email mentorship to others
- ② An online forum for all to post questions and insights; and other educational resources

The website was developed with stakeholder involvement throughout, including formal interviews and feedback from 30 peers, 18 researchers, and 3 funding agency representatives as well as a Stakeholder Advisory Board.

Please forward this email to other relevant listserves and share it with peers, researchers, and funding agencies.

Lisa Najavits, PhD

Professor, Boston University School of Medicine

Research Psychologist, Veterans Affairs Boston Healthcare System

najavits@bu.edu

8. TAPPING THE POWER OF NEURODIVERSITY & A CALL TO ACTION

K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan
Institute on Employment and Disability



All about Skills: Tapping the Power of Neurodiversity

Susanne M. Bruyère

Neurodiversity. It's a term that's increasingly familiar to those in the workforce diversity and inclusion sphere, and for good reason. It's about the strategic integration of people with neurological disabilities into all workplaces, and its practice can yield exceptional results for both employers and employees, including those on the autism spectrum.

That's right. Numerous businesses that already have a good foundation in disability inclusion are beginning to plan recruiting and onboarding activities that target people in similar professional networks to meet their business needs. These companies are recognizing and proactively recruiting the skills and talents that people with unique neurological characteristics, including those on the autism spectrum, can offer. It's a concept that's gaining steam in many industry sectors, such as manufacturing, telecommunications, finance and information technology. In fact, an [article on neurodiversity in the current issue of *Harvard Business Review*](#) takes an in-depth look at this alignment of skills to workforce needs. One of the companies featured in the article, enterprise software developer SAP, emphasizes hiring people on the autism spectrum for their skills and abilities-and the results speak for themselves.

Launched in 2013, SAP's groundbreaking [Autism at Work](#) program set a corporate goal of employing 650 employees on the autism spectrum by 2020 across a wide range of job categories. One of the first steps has been changing the way the company interviews people with autism, offering something more akin to a trial work period rather than just structured interviews.

"Out of a hundred resumes I would send, I would only get one response back. And when I did apply, because I was a bit monotone or stiff during the interview, they overlooked me," says Patrick, a current SAP employee on the autism spectrum whose life was changed by the Autism at Work program. Today, Patrick works as an IT project associate, having joined SAP through the successful program that has employed nearly 120 colleagues in nine countries.

SAP is not alone. Earlier this month, the company jointly hosted an event with the support of the Olitsky Family Foundation, the Stanford University Autism Research Center and my organization, Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations. The *Autism at Work Summit* showcased how companies have implemented programs to harness the power of the untapped talent pool of adults on the autism spectrum, such as through initiatives at [Microsoft](#), [EY](#) and [Hewlett-Packard Enterprise](#). In fact, the ILR School's K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disability has proudly partnered with HPE to facilitate the distribution of [materials](#) to help interested employers globally develop initiatives to provide skilled employment opportunities for job seekers on the autism spectrum.

We were also very pleased to be joined at the summit by colleagues from the Department of Labor's [Office of Disability Employment Policy](#), because these companies' experiences have broader implications, providing meaningful insight into workplace policies and practices that facilitate success for all employees, including those with disabilities. One clear example was a reaffirmation that matching job candidates' skillsets to open jobs leads to better business outcomes.

rodiversity

- [*HBR on Tapping the Power of Neurodiversity*](#)

A number of recent articles and activities have highlighted how many employers are recognizing and reaping the benefits of workforce neurodiversity – the strategic inclusion of people with neurological disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum. Reflecting this, the current issue of the Harvard Business Review (HBR) took an in-depth look at how many technology industry companies have implemented the talent acquisition strategy, and Dr. Susanne M. Bruyère, Director of the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability at Cornell University, penned a post for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) blog sharing insight from a recent conference on the topic. [Read the HBR article](#) or [DOL blog post](#).

9. SELF-ADVOCACY AND OTHER RESOURCES

National Self-Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center Rolls Out New Resource Website

The Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SAR-TAC) is launching a new website at www.selfadvocacyinfo.org to help fulfill its mission to strengthen self-advocacy for people with disabilities by supporting self-advocacy organizations to grow in diversity and leadership.

In 2016, Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) was awarded a grant from the Administration for Community Living to establish SAR-TAC, the first-ever National Resource Center for Self-Advocacy. The resource center is funded as a Project of National Significance by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) under the Administration on Disabilities.

The new website will serve as an online location to categorize, promote, and share the best tools and resources for self-advocacy across the country. Resources range in topics, including board management, using social media, involving youth in self-advocacy groups, and more. Key website components include:

- A resource library/clearinghouse: a one-stop presence for showcasing and promoting outstanding self-advocacy organizational development resources and resources related to self-advocacy issues.
- Feedback and reviews about the tools and resources: a way to hear how the resources are making a difference in communities across the country.
- A submission page to submit new resources created by self-advocates to the collection.
- A technical assistance request page for requests from organizations seeking assistance and support.
- Success stories about self-advocacy and its impact on individual, community, state and national levels.
- Information about additional SAR-TAC project activities. This includes the Fellowship Program, the Civil Rights Project, upcoming webinars, trainings, and the 2018 National Self-Advocacy Conference.

ACL funds SAR-TAC to empower people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for enhancing

their voice on issues important to their well-being and daily lives.

- [*Understanding Workplace Personal Assistance Services*](#)

One of the provisions of the updated Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act regulations issued by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in January of this year requires federal agencies to provide personal assistance services (PAS) to certain employees with disabilities as a form of affirmative action. PAS is not required as a reasonable accommodation in the private employment context, however, except when needed for work-related travel. A recently updated resource from the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) explores the new Section 501 requirement and provides general information about PAS in both the federal and private sectors. [Read the JAN publication on PAS.](#)

- [*Federal Exchange on Employment and Disability*](#)

Last week, EARN was pleased to assist the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in hosting the quarterly meeting of the Federal Exchange on Employment and Disability. The meeting was held at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with the feature presentation focusing on its mentoring program and how other agencies can implement similar efforts to advance disability inclusion. Other topics on the agenda included Section 501 and OPM's plans for resurveying the federal workforce later this year. [Learn more about Federal Government disability inclusion efforts](#)

10. [OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE](#)

- [Employment Success Stories](#)

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment for Individuals with Blindness or Other Visual Impairments](#) is seeking [employment success stories](#) that demonstrate how employment of all types is equally attainable to people who are blind or visually impaired.

Candidates can be from any industry or profession, including entrepreneurs. The stories will be featured as [part of the center's National Technical Assistance Center on Blindness and Visual Impairment \(NTAC-BVI\)](#). To nominate a success story, contact Sophie Kershaw at skershaw@colled.msstate.edu or 662/325-6695.

- **The Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation is looking for your input!**

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:

- [**For Family Members**](#)
Wednesday, May 10, 2017 @ 1:00-2:00 pm ET
- [**For Individuals in Mental Health Recovery**](#)
Wednesday, May 10, 2017 @ 2:00-3:00 pm ET
- [**Open Session \(i.e., researchers, employers, educators—anyone with an opinion is welcome\)**](#)
Wednesday, May 24, 2017 @ 1:00-2:00 pm ET

[**Sign up now!**](#)

