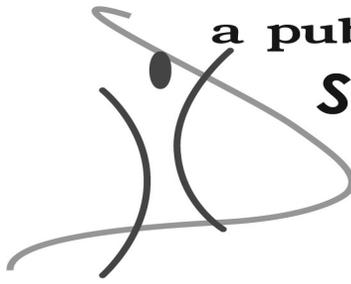


Centerpieces

a publication of

Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL)

Serving People with Disabilities in Southwestern Minnesota



SWCIL Board Member Spotlight by Tashauna Swanson



Tashauna Swanson

I became a Southwestern Center for Independent Living board member a little over three years ago, and have served as the Treasurer for the past year. My first initial introduction to SWCIL occurred around twenty years ago when I was a high school student. A representative came to meet with me regarding my college transition goals and what SWCIL could assist me with. I have an unknown muscular condition similar to Muscular Dystrophy, and didn't really know about all the resources available to me. SWCIL helped point me in the right direction.

Following that, I attended SMSU and earned a BA in art with a concentration in graphic design. I still love to learn and am interested in art, writing, and technology. I often work on web design projects and manage social media for a movie production. My hobbies include reading, traveling, and being a foodie.

I have enjoyed my time serving on the SWCIL board, as I feel like I am helping to assure that other individuals with disabilities have access to resources that will help them succeed. We all know life isn't always the easiest to navigate; organizations like SWCIL can help make trying to be independent a little smoother. Being a part of the board also helps me to feel more connected to the community.

Years ago, I didn't have any idea of the full scope of what a Center for Independent Living does beyond aiding students with disabilities and their transition into being independent adults. In the time since, I have learned SWCIL offers much more than that! Not only does the organization aid in connecting people who have disabilities with services they can utilize, it also offers its ramp program, veteran services, and advocacy. We are extremely lucky to have SWCIL serving our region!

Fall Issue 2018

In this issue . . .

Consumer Success Story
SWCIL travels to Washington DC
Meet new SWCIL staff

. . . And more

Consumer Success Story by Shelby Horner

Many high school students have large dreams, but also face challenges and have choices to make after they graduate from high school. For some it starts with college. Others choose to go straight into the workforce.

Ka Sia Xiong, a high school senior in the small town of Walnut Grove, was one of those students facing such choices. She was looking at moving to a bigger town where she could pursue either going to school or to work. With no means of transportation or a job, this was extremely challenging.

Ka Sia ultimately chose to move to Marshall, a larger town that has more opportunities as well as available transportation - one of her top needs. After learning how to search for apartments and fill out the applications, she was able to work with a management company to find an apartment, and make the move.

With moving to a new community came the struggles of making new friends and learning the area. In collaboration with SWCIL, employment services and other agencies, Ka Sia is well on her way to learning her way around Marshall and can now take the bus to appointments and interviews as she begins her job search. In preparing for that new job she has been working hard with SWCIL staff on skills training such as interviewing, proper work ethics, budgeting, and more.

It has been a long, rocky road but Ka Sia has been able to push through it and is now leading an independent and happy life!



Find us and Like our page to keep up with all the latest SWCIL news and events.



Adults-Only Coloring Club

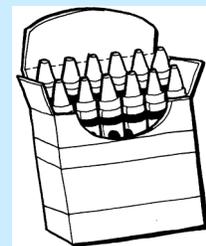
**When: September 24, October 29, November 26,
December 17, 2018**

Where: Marshall SWCIL Office

Time: 4:30-6:00 P.M.

Cost: Free

RSVP: 507.532.2221 OR 800.422.1485 (for MN Relay, dial 711)



Centerpieces is looking for your input ...

If you have poems, personal successes, letters to the editor, or questions for our readers, **send your submissions to:** Deb at SWCIL 109 S. 5th St. Suite 700 Marshall, MN 56258 Or Fax to: 507-532-2222, attention: Deb, or email to deb@swcil.com Submissions will be printed as space allows and as determined by the Editor. Please include name, address, and phone number with submitted material.

Recently, SWCIL co-sponsored a six-week class: **Cooking is a SNAP**, with a SNAP-Ed Educator from the University of Minnesota Extension in Lyon County. This was a nutrition education program, that taught adults with disabilities skills to help achieve healthier living on a budget. Through hands-on practice, participants acquired cooking, food preparation, and food safety skills. They also received money-saving smart shopping strategies and practiced ways to increase daily physical activity!



Chef graphic

Be sure to watch for future cooking classes that SWCIL will be offering. If there are classes that you would like to see offered, don't hesitate to give us a call!

[www.extension.umn.edu/families and youth](http://www.extension.umn.edu/families_and_youth)

Feel free to check out this website for resources regarding healthy homes, futures, children, etc. For example: topics include parenting, success in school, tough topics with kids, youth development programs, child and adolescent development. Under the topic of parenting, you can find topics such as: encouraging positive behavior, communication and screen time, overindulgence, and divorce and family transitions. There are also many other topics available.

Wheelchair Basketball Clinic

by Colby Yost

SWCIL and the SMSU Wheelchair Basketball Team are teaming up to present a Wheelchair Basketball Sports Clinic.

Date: Saturday, September 15, 2018 1:00 - 3:00 P.M.

Place: SMSU Gym 1501 State Street Marshall, MN 56258

Admission is free. Please RSVP by September 8, 2018

SMSU is providing the use of 12 wheelchairs specifically designed for basketball. If you have your own chair please state within your RSVP.

This event is open to anyone who has an interest in learning about the sport of wheelchair basketball, including dribbling, shooting, how to maneuver the chair and rules of the game. Family and friends are welcome!

SWCIL Travels to Washington DC by Deb Gratz

After several months of planning, booking flights, and arranging for accommodating rooms, several SWCIL staff members, and one of our board members, boarded their flights and headed to Washington DC to attend the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) Annual Conference. The theme of the conference this year was Mobilize-Resistance Through Action, in an effort to protect our programs and secure the independence of people with disabilities. The highlight of the conference was a march (in the rain) to the U.S. Capitol with over 600 participants, followed by a rally on the lawn in front of the Capitol. The conference consisted of a variety of workshops, on topics ranging from advocating for our rights, supporting independence for Veterans, to how to strengthen the Independent Living Network in our home state. A day was spent visiting with Legislator's assistants, explaining to them what a Center for Independent Living is, providing them with information on services CILs provide in our state, and presenting them our 2017 Annual Report. Free time allowed for touring our Nation's Capitol, walks through botanical gardens, visiting monuments and museums and enjoying Washington DC. I am thankful for having had the opportunity to be a part of this rewarding trip.



Rally on the front lawn of the U.S. Capitol



Harry on the march in the rain



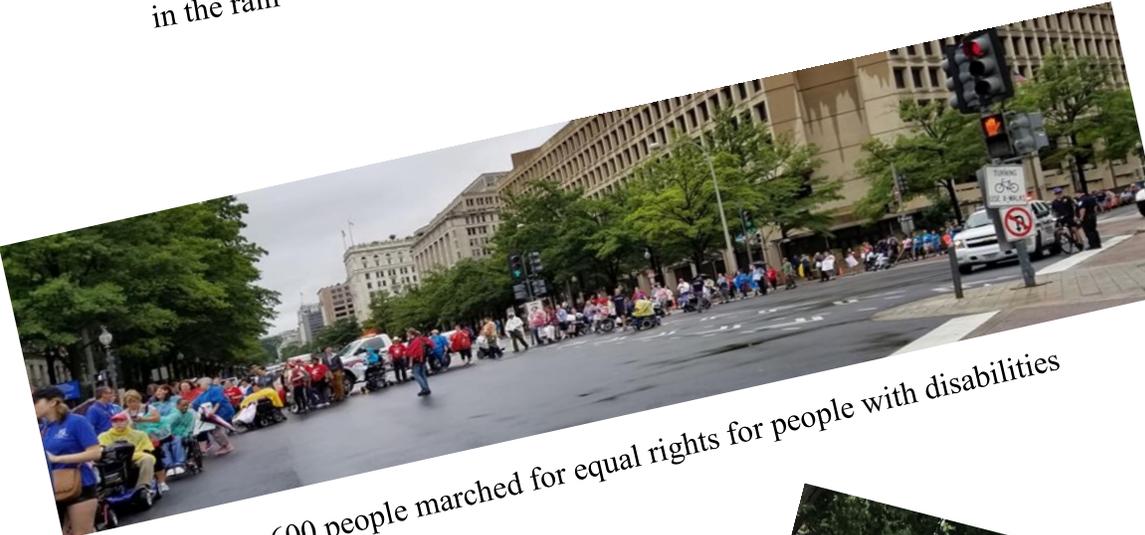
Vicky with Granddaughter, Camilla



Colby, Harry and Cody at the Conference



Marie on the march in the rain



Over 600 people marched for equal rights for people with disabilities



Jen with a tower of lunches!



Maria at the Lincoln Memorial



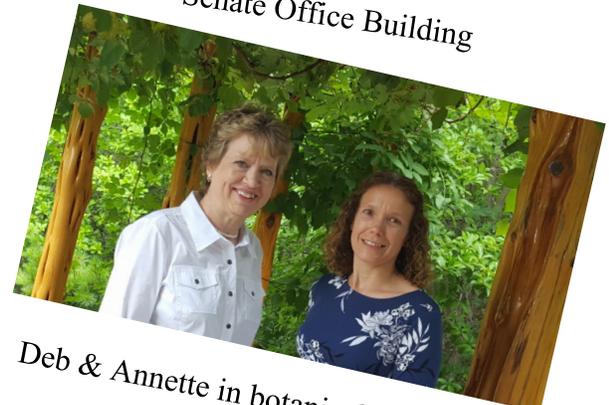
Melissa with Kitty on the march



Senate Office Building



Shelby in botanical garden



Deb & Annette in botanical garden

New SWCIL Staff



Steve Eischens

Hi, my name is Steve Eischens and I was the intern for the summer here at SWCIL. I am currently attending Southwest Minnesota State University and am one year away from completing my bachelor's degree in Exercise Science. I have been active in adaptive sports for many years as I started playing wheelchair basketball and wheelchair softball through Courage Kenny

Rehabilitation Institute, located in Golden Valley, when I was 9 years old. Since I graduated high school and moved on from participating in those programs I have volunteered with the softball team when I have been back home for the summers. I also enjoy fishing and pretty much anything outdoors.

Hi! I'm Dan Wahl, the new IL Specialist serving Cottonwood, Jackson, Nobles, and Murray counties. I'm thrilled to be working with people who have disabilities in this area, for a couple of reasons.

First, I'm blessed with the opportunity to use my mental health struggles in a positive way. I have bipolar disorder, which has incapacitated me several times.

Emerging from the care of my parents, I struggled to find my way in the world. Completely inexperienced, I nervously took a part-time teacher's aide job where I could receive nurturing and training. I started college again (I had to drop out a decade earlier), and was led to a life of teaching, which, except for a short term derailment, has lasted 15 years. I hope to apply my teaching skills in my work at SWCIL.

I'm very grateful to be here where I grew up, in SW Minnesota. I'm near most of my family, specifically my parents, my wife and four children. Even if my family wasn't here to support me, I feel a strong connection to the land and the people here. You are one of those people. With humble gratitude, I look forward to serving you in this new career.



Dan Wahl

Our Mission Statement: SWCIL is dedicated to working with and responding to the ever changing needs of persons with disabilities in Southwestern Minnesota to promote societal acceptance, inclusion, and equal access for all persons with disabilities.

Check out the MN Department of Natural Resources website at <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/licenses/special/index.html> Or call 651-296-6157 to obtain permits and licenses for people with disabilities. You can complete a form to fish without a license, to hunt from a standing motor vehicle, as well as apply for discounted state park permits and camping rates.

Some MN state parks offer tours with accessible options, and many MN state parks have accessible campsites, lodging and trails. Visit the underground mines and historic mine tours of northern MN or go on a 1.5 hour tour and experience both the prairie and the bison right here in SW Minnesota at the Blue Mounds State Park near Luverne. Visit the DNR website or make that call today to enjoy some end-of-the-summer outdoor fun.

Marshall Area Halloween Social Rec

When: October 26, 2018

Where: Marshall Area YMCA

Time: 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.

Cost: \$5.00 per person attending

(Checks can be made out to SWCIL - Receipts will be available)

PLEASE RSVP 507.532.2221 or 800.422.1485 (for MN Relay, dial 711)

Reasonable Accommodation requests including dietary needs must be received by October 19, 2018

**Smoke &
fragrance-
free**

**Friends &
Family
Welcome!**

Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL) is a community-based, non-profit organization serving people with all disability types in the ten counties of southwestern Minnesota through:

*Individual and Systems Advocacy *Cross-disability Peer Counseling
*Information and Referral *Independent Living Skills Training *Public Education

All of SWCIL's programs and services are consumer controlled with an emphasis on improving the quality of life for all people with disabilities. SWCIL's aim is to provide education and awareness to promote inclusion, acceptance and equal access in society for all people with disabilities.

For more information about SWCIL programs and services, please contact us at: 109 South 5th Street, Suite 700—Marshall, MN 56258 Phone: (507) 532-2221 or (800) 422-1485 (For MN Relay, dial 711) or fax (507) 532-2222.

Southwestern Center for Independent Living
109 South 5th Street, Suite 700
Marshall, MN 56258-1268
Phone: 507/ 532-2221 or 800-422-1485 (For MN Relay, dial 711)

Website: <http://www.swcil.com>
E-mail: swcil@swcil.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SWCILMarshallMN

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Funding for Independent Living Services is provided by MN DEED-VRS from the State's General Fund and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.