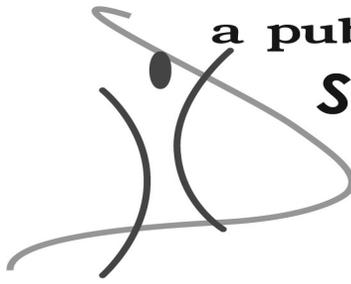


Centerpieces

a publication of

Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL)

Serving People with Disabilities in Southwestern Minnesota



SWCIL Board Member Spotlight – Pam Russell



Pam Russell

Hi! My name is Pam Russell. I am a SWCIL board member. I work full time as the Fiscal Manager at the Private Industry Council. I also contract with New Horizons and Women's Rural Advocacy Programs, Marshall Food4Kids, and volunteer at UCAP's tax clinic. I have two grown daughters. I grew up by Worthington and attended Heron Lake-Okabena High School. Then at Granite Falls Area Vo-Tech I obtained a two-year Public Accounting Certificate, getting my first job in Marshall. I went back to college while working, being married with a family, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in Accounting. I like living in this area,

being involved with church and a lot of groups.

While going to SMSU I was exposed to persons with disabilities. Through a job I worked at, I found out about SWCIL, and through presentations I have gotten to know more about it. Years ago a close friend, through a diving accident, became paralyzed, and I feel that people with any type of disability deserve and have a right to live wherever they want to, however they want to, and not be told how to live. To support and expand those rights is why I wanted to be on the board.

I have served on the board just over a year, and I've enjoyed it. I've gotten to know a lot more about the agency, the persons working for it, and its consumers. I enjoy it.

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Board Member Spotlight ... Continued

Some of the duties of a board member that I have been involved with include reviewing compensation and bylaws and reviewing and updating some of SWCIL's governance documents. We also guide the director and staff as to policies and support outreach, and meeting with legislators. As a board member, we see how much SWCIL can do with other agencies, and just enhance and guide that, but not micromanage.

I like seeing the board members and staff members at the meetings, and hearing from staff members about what they are doing, and it is great seeing the agency interact with other agencies. If I was not on the board, I might not think about accessibility issues the way I do now, like whether buildings are accessible, for instance. I have become more aware in that way, and I enjoy being able to advocate.

It was also really neat to be at the Capitol recently when they held the hearing about increasing funding for Centers [for Independent Living]. That room was full, and you could see some of the legislators get teary-eyed. It was really emotional with great testimonies. I was glad to be a part of that.

I would encourage anyone to become a board member and to learn about the services that SWCIL offers. If you are a part of the board, you become more familiar with the agency, and then, if given the opportunity, can make other people more aware of what SWCIL can and does do.

To apply for board membership, contact SWCIL for an application.

What is WIOA? by Shelby Horner

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) was brought into effect in the summer of 2015. One change resulting from the Act requires an opportunity for informed employment choices for individuals with disabilities working for less than minimum wage. In Minnesota, Centers for Independent Living (CIL's) were contracted by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Vocational Rehabilitation (MNDEED-VR) to make available annually, career consultation sessions for adults over the age of 24 working in any employment program in MN for less than minimum wage. These meetings allow an opportunity for the employee to talk about their current work, employment goals, and to be afforded the choice to learn more about competitive and integrated employment options.

Every year SWCIL meets with around 700 employees in 15 counties to discuss competitive integrated employment. SWCIL's role after the one-to-one conversation is to be an advocate for the employee, if needed, in gaining more information and to help the person and their team begin a discussion about the person's employment goal(s).

What is WIOA? Continued

Some individuals begin exploring career options by volunteering to get experience or to start learning what they do or don't enjoy. Other individuals use the connections they've made over the years to find a job. It's a different process for each one and has been a learning process for everyone involved. The job-finding process can be long and gruesome for some, and not everyone chooses to explore options or is successful with their goals, but it ultimately is worth it for many that choose the journey.

One individual SWCIL met with found their dream job in a library. From the beginning they knew that, because of their love of books, it was where they belonged. Others choosing to work toward competitive employment have found jobs, for example, in grocery stores as checkers, baggers, or stockers. Wherever their path leads, it has been a joy working with individuals as they begin their journey working toward the person's own employment goals.

Craft Night

The Marshall Area Social Recreation Committee held a fun-filled Craft Night at the SWCIL office. Attendees were given the opportunity to gather with peers in the community for recreation and relaxation where they made some beaded projects including bracelets, necklaces and key chains.

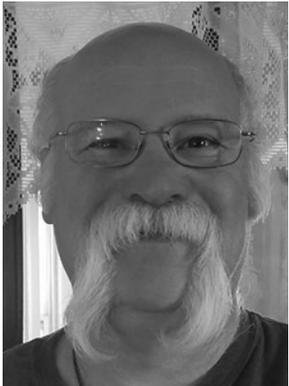
Next Craft Night: Plant a Flower Monday, June 10th, 4:30-5:30 P.M. To RSVP, be sure to check the Events page.



Consumer Success Stories by Linda Halbur

Obtained Employment:

Ela is an 18 year old woman with learning challenges. She wanted to find a job but had not been able to obtain one. She worked with SWCIL staff to learn where to look for jobs, how to complete an application, as well as how to present herself when picking up an application from a place of potential employment. Ela took the initiative to pick up an application and then complete it and submit it to the agency. She learned the skills to follow up with a phone call after dropping the application off. She was granted a job interview. Ela learned the skills regarding how to present herself as well as skills for a job interview and to follow up with a thank you note. Ela was successful in her job search and is now gainfully employed at a skilled nursing facility near her home.



Obtained Benefits:

Larry was let go from his job due to health issues. He applied for unemployment but was overwhelmed with the process and ran into a lot of red tape due to his health concerns. With SWCIL's help he was able to navigate the system and advocate for himself, finally getting benefits five weeks after applying. Larry has continued with job searches and has been encouraged to pursue his own business of making customized wooden signs and boxes.

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.

Inclusive Fitness by Colby Yost

The Southwestern Center for Independent Living offers various social recreation classes throughout the year. One such class is an Inclusive Fitness class. SWCIL partners with Exercise Science students from Southwest Minnesota State University to provide a class available for people with disabilities to teach proper form and technique, how to adapt fitness movements for different exercises in accordance to fitness levels, and how to incorporate fitness into everyday living.

Class instructor and Exercise Science major Steve Eischens stated, “this class is for anyone interested; it is an introduction level class on how to stay active and healthy.” Steve also said, “the class is able to meet the needs of every participant and helps overcome challenges of getting started in a healthy lifestyle. It’s so much fun and my favorite part is meeting and getting to know each person and learning what their strengths are.”

If you are interested in learning more about this or other classes, please contact the SWCIL office.



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



Assistive Technology by Adam Chandler

Did you know that there is what you could call Assistive Technology (AT) built into all smartphones and tablets? These settings can help with access to the device, learning and attention. Calendars, reminders and timers are very effective AT for keeping on task and on schedule. Mobile devices also provide alternative navigation buttons, screen magnifiers, text to speech, and dictation. All these options are in the palm of your hand, yet most people have very little knowledge of what is there or how to access it.

Along with the suite of built-in settings on mobile devices, there are literally thousands of Apps to download that cover everything from American Sign Language (ASL) virtual translators to apps that describe your environment through the use of the built-in camera. While these apps are not always as reliable as a dedicated device, they show the potential for important advancements in Assistive Technology.

Smartphones and tablets can now control everyday appliances that are connected on the same Wi-Fi. They can take the place of your TV and stereo remotes, adjust your thermostat, or turn off your light. Those are just some of the things that a mobile device can do to make a person more independent.

Bluetooth accessories can add even more versatility to a mobile device. Pairing a smartwatch with your mobile device is another feature that can greatly improve a person's ability to keep schedules, get reminders and even make phone calls without needing to have a physical hold on a mobile device. Some smartwatches and bands come equipped with health monitors that can track heart rate, sleep patterns, and personal activity. Similar to smart watches, Bluetooth headsets can allow users to make or receive phone calls, get reminders, directions, and messages without taking their eyes or hands off task.

To learn more about how to access assistive technology, please contact Adam at the SWCIL office, at 507-532-2221 (ext. 113).

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.

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 Street, Suite 700, Marshall, MN 56258 or call the office at 507.532.2221 ext 101.

Upcoming SWCIL Events

RSVP: 507.532.2221 OR 800.422.1485 (for MN Relay, dial 711)
swcil@swcil.com OR message us on Facebook

All events are smoke and fragrance free

Reasonable Accommodations upon request

Gardening Club

When: June 4th and every Tuesday morning, all summer

Where: Garden Plot on State Highway 23 near SW Coaches

Time: 9:00 –10:00 A.M. **Cost:** Free **Please RSVP!**

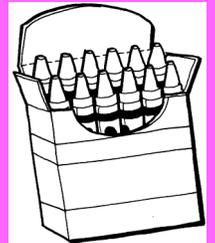
Learn to make salsa at the end of the season.

Adults-Only Coloring Club

When: June 24, July 29, Aug. 26, Sept. 30, Oct. 28

Where: Marshall SWCIL Office

Time: 4:30-6:00 P.M. **Cost:** Free **Please RSVP!**



Craft Night

When: June 10 (plant a flower), August 12 (tie-dye), Sept. 23 (sand art)
November 4 (decorate a Christmas ornament)

Where: Marshall SWCIL Office **Please RSVP!**

Time: 4:30-5:30 P.M. **Cost:** \$2.00 (receipts available)

Marshall Area Social Rec

When: June 28, October 25, December 6

Where: Locations vary—please call to RSVP!

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

Cost: Costs vary—call for details

To receive flyers by email, call or email swcil@swcil.com

Friends & family are welcome and encouraged to attend

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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