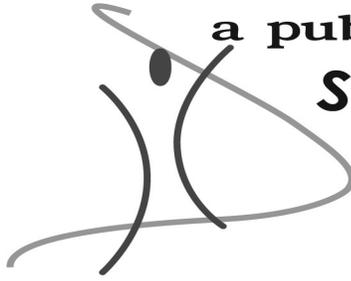


Centerpieces

a publication of

Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL)

Serving People with Disabilities in Southwestern Minnesota



Senator Dahms



Senator Weber



Senator Rosen



Rep. Swedzinski

Annual State Capitol Visits

Late this winter SWCIL held Zoom meetings with each of the eight legislators who represent the districts and counties within its service area (Senators Dahms, Weber, and Rosen, and Representatives Swedzinski, Torkelson, Schomacker, Hamilton, and Olson). This activity provides an opportunity for the consumers we serve to share, with the senators and representatives, in their own words what is important to them and about their independent living goals. For some this is getting whatever help they need to go to college or to begin a new job. For others it means getting assistance with applying for Social Security or other benefits, or locating alternative payment sources for assistive technologies such as the installation of a wheelchair ramp, or grab bars in a bathroom.

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Rep. Torkelson



Rep. Schomacker



Rep. Hamilton



Rep. Olson

Summer Issue 2022

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What is MA-EPD?

Are you someone with a disability who works? If so, and you're not already aware of or benefiting from the MA-EPD program, you would do well to learn more about it below.

Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities allows working people with disabilities to qualify for Medical Assistance (MA) using higher income and asset limits. MA-EPD encourages people with disabilities to work and enjoy the benefits of being employed.

To qualify for MA-EPD, you must: 1) be certified disabled by the Social Security Administration or the State Medical Review Team; 2) have monthly earnings of more than \$65 (there is no upper income limit); 3) be employed and have Social Security and Medicare (FICA) taxes withheld or paid from earned income; 4) meet the MA-EPD asset limit; 5) pay a premium, if required; 6) pay an unearned income obligation, if required.

What is the MA-EPD asset limit? Assets are what you own, such as cash, savings accounts, and property where you do not live. The asset limit for MA-EPD is \$20,000. Some assets that do not count are: 1) your home; 2) household goods, clothing and personal items; 3) one motor vehicle, under certain conditions; 4) your spouse's assets; 5) retirement accounts; 6) a medical expense account set up through an employer; 7) assets set aside for burial expenses; 8) certain other assets if you are an American Indian.

Do you have to pay for MA-EPD? If you have proof that you are an American Indian, there will be no cost for your coverage. Otherwise, you must pay a premium based on your monthly income and household size, which is based on a sliding scale. Your monthly income will be \$35 or more. The more income you have, the higher your premium. But only your income is counted, not your spouse's.

If you lose your job through no fault of your own (which your employer must verify), including because of your medical condition, you can stay on MA-EPD for up to four months.

Continued on page 3 ...

What is MA-EPD? ... Continued from p.2

If you qualify for MA-EPD, the state will pay for all or part of your healthcare services, such as: inpatient hospital services; medical equipment and supplies; personal care services; physical, occupational and speech therapy; and physician and health clinic visits. If you have Medicare or other health insurance, MA-EPD may pay part of the insurance premiums.

What information do you have to report for MA-EPD? Within 10 days you must report the following: changes in earned or unearned income, and if you begin or end a job or self-employment.

For more information about how working may affect other benefits you may have (for example, Social Security, subsidized housing, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits), visit www.db101.org or call the Disability Linkage Line at 866-333-2466.

The information in this article comes directly from a MN Department of Human Services brochure, but it is not all there is to know about the program. For more information, contact your county human services agency or the Disability Linkage Line. You can also go to the DHS website at www.mn.gov/dhs/maepd.

New Staff Highlight



Hi, my name is Gerri Carter. I'm married to Jim Carter—not THE Jimmy Carter, but sometimes it is a little nutty at our house! I have a strong faith in my God, and I try to live that out every day. We have two daughters. Diane is married to Bob, and is the mother to our beautiful, adorable grandson Noah, with another grandchild due in September. Our second daughter, Kelli, is our Angel, as we lost her in a car accident 16 years ago—May 6, 2006. Life is sweet, and we are Blessed. I am excited to be here at SWCIL and look forward to doing GREAT THINGS!!

Photo of Gerri

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.

Open Position at SWCIL

Assistive Technology (AT) Specialist

The Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL) is seeking a full-time Assistive Technology (AT) Specialist. Job functions include: identifying AT solutions that facilitate independence; provide AT demonstration, information and referral, and device loans; conduct access assessments; setup and take down of portable aluminum ramps.



Desirable qualifications: Experience with disabilities. Proficiency with adapting training approaches to match learning styles. Associate's or greater degree from an accredited college. Knowledge and proficiency with a variety of assistive technologies. Ability to diagnose and troubleshoot hardware and software problems. Ability to work effectively with students, staff, and members of the community from diverse backgrounds.

Picture of portable aluminum ramp

\$20 - \$24 per hour starting wage based on experience and qualifications. Requires travel within SW MN. Flexible hours. Benefits include: paid vacation, sick, holiday, and personal days; retirement plan matching; life, short-term disability, & health insurances.

To apply, send cover letter & resume to: Executive Director, SWCIL, 109 S. 5th Street, #700, Marshall MN 56258 or melissa@swcil.com. SWCIL is an equal opportunity employer.

Access Press Looking for Board Members

ACCESS PRESS is expanding its board of directors and is looking to secure at least a couple of new board members from outstate.

ROLE: To be a voting member of the ACCESS PRESS board of directors, responsible along with other board members for supporting state-of-the-art business operations and a sustainable and growing financial base, and fiduciary oversight. We oversee and promote general fundraising efforts on behalf of ACCESS PRESS including but not limited to annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, memorial and honorary gifts, and corporate sponsorships. Board members participate in developing, implementing, and monitoring advertising, editorial, and social media policies guided by the ACCESS PRESS mission.

For more information, go to <https://accesspress.org/about/join-our-board/> or contact Access Press at P.O. Box 40006 Industrial Station, St. Paul, MN 55104-8006. Phone: 651-644-2133; FAX: 651-644-2136; Email: access@accesspress.org.

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 live events are smoke and fragrance free
Reasonable Accommodations upon request**

2022 Events

Check swcil.com and SWCIL's Facebook page for updates

July 11/Aug 8/Sept 12 – 4:30-5:30 p.m. – Coloring Club

Jul 27 – 4:30-6:00 p.m. – Virtual Bingo (via Zoom)

Jul 22 (Fri) – 5:30-7:30 p.m. – Social Rec Dance — Beach Party Bash - in person. \$5.00 each. Patriot Park, Marshall

August 10-14 Disability Awareness @ The Lyon County Fair. Pre-registration required. Visit our website: SWCIL.COM and click on Disability Awareness at the top of the page to register for your gift bag with tickets for food, ice cream, events at the fair or a sensory bag.

Community Education Classes in person & via Zoom...

August 3, Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Parents Supporting Parents

August 2, 9, 16, & 22—4:00-6:00 p.m. Driver's Education Crash Course

July 16, 1:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. Legal Representation Options

**To receive flyers by email, call or email swcil@swcil.com
Friends & family are welcome and encouraged to attend!**

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.

MN SILC Seeking Youth Submissions

Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council (MNSILC) is seeking submissions of creative works from youth around the state of Minnesota for our Fall Conference. We are interested in what our youth have to say and we want to hear from them as we strive to create a more independent living environment for individuals living with disabilities. Independent living is having opportunities to make decisions that affect one's life, the ability to pursue activities of one's own choosing - limited only in the same ways that one's nondisabled neighbors are limited.

The Details

What – We are looking for creative works from MN youth

Theme – How can we change the world to make it a better place for people living with disabilities

Reward – All works will be displayed at our Fall Conference as space allows. Selected winners will be published on MNSILC platforms and featured in some of our publications

Who – Minnesota youth up to age 24

Where to send – Digital submission can be emailed to mnsilc1215@gmail.com and physical submissions can be mailed to MNSILC, 13189 Gladiola Way, Apple Valley, MN 55124

How are winners determined – Representatives of the MNSILC will make the final choices

What is a Creative Work? * A story * A poem * An article * A photograph

*A painting, drawing *Music or a song *A video



Logo that says
CHANGE/CHANCE

Questions? Call 612-518-1497 or email mnsilc1215@gmail.com.

State Capitol Cont. from page 1

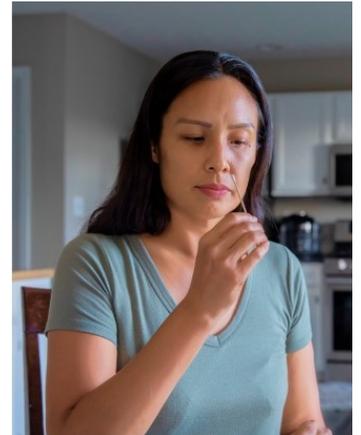
In addition to eleven SWCIL staff who participated in this year's meetings, eighteen consumers shared their own personal testimonies of how they have each been able to accomplish great things over the past year with the help of SWCIL staff.

If you work with SWCIL in any capacity that helped you live more independently, we hope you will consider joining us next year when we host these meetings again, which everyone who participates in always enjoys.

More Free Covid-19 Tests

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, there is no need for you to go out and spend \$15 on a Covid-19 test when you can get four of them for free at the following link:

<https://www.covidtests.gov/>



Picture of woman holding Covid 19 tester



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

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 and *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
Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/US-xO75AFKykiFuz4EiVj9lw>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/swcilmarshallmn>

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