

NICIL NEWS

NICIL: YOUR PARTNER, YOUR RESOURCE



NICIL

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815-625-7860 (voice)
www.nicil.org

NICIL Team Members

Direct Services

- Julie
Independent Living
Specialist
- Jessica
Center Coordinator
- Emily
Program Manager

Administrative Services

- Amy Jo
Fiscal Manager
- Michele Miller
Executive Director

Northwestern Illinois Center for Independent Living (NICIL) is a not for profit agency designed to serve people with disabilities by people with disabilities. We are currently funded through the award of three contracts from the Illinois Department of Human Services under the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) that allows us to provide the services we do. The Personal Assistant (PA) Program is one of the services that we are so honored to provide.

The NICIL PA Program consists of two different elements, one geared toward consumers and one for providers. On the consumer side, the NICIL team works with the consumer to recognize their disabilities, to identify the limitations in the activities of daily living (ADL's) that are assessed by DRS, and to prepare all necessary documentation required for these assessments. NICIL has a number of tools to assist consumers with this process, as well as a vast knowledge of the program.

Each year NICIL offers at least eight (8) personal assistant orientation trainings for persons looking for employment in the rewarding field of personal assistants. Anyone interested in becoming a personal assistant is required to complete an application and background check form. There is a \$15 fee for the background check. Anyone meeting the minimum requirements of the program will be invited to the orientation training and then added to the NICIL referral list. People on the referral list will be referred to consumers who are looking to hire a personal assistant.

Please contact NICIL at 815-625-7860 for more information on becoming a Personal Assistant or for assistance with navigating the DRS process of applying for Personal Assistant services.

ACCESSIBILITY TOPIC

Many businesses in our service area are not accessible to individuals in a wheelchair or to those who use walkers because they are historical buildings. Perhaps you have wondered why businesses can get away with not making their business accessible. Unless the business is new construction or a major renovation is taking place businesses do not have to comply with the set forth accessibility laws of having a ramp and having wide doorways. However, the business has to be willing to make accommodations for individuals. A great example is the Oregon library. The Oregon library was built in 1909 before the ADA was ever thought of and it has about 8 steps just to get into the building and then more stairs once inside. However they're employees will bring the books out to an individual who can't get inside.

For more information on ways you can make your business accessible contact NICIL at: 815-625-7860 or email frontdesk@nicil.org.

FEATURED PARTNER

Lee-Ogle Transportation System (LOTS) allows mobility to the general public and have been serving the public since 2007. LOTS has a fleet of vehicles. Transportation is available Monday through Friday 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM with the exception of observed holidays. LOTS also will not operate during inclement weather for safety of riders and drivers, local media carry closure information. Reservations for rides should be requested at least 1 business day in advance by 2:00 PM for local trips or 2 business days in advance by 2:00 PM for out of town rides by calling 888-239-9228, drivers can not take reservations. Schedule rides early to make sure transportation is available. All transportation is based on space and vehicle availability.



Fares for using LOTS are as follows: Age 5 and under \$1.00 one way trip in town, must be accompanied by an adult. Ages 6 – 59 \$2.00 one way trip in town. Age 60+ or Disabled \$1.00 one way trip in town or out of town. Out of town is considered a change in zip code and the rate is \$0.35 per mile if this is less than the standard rate the standard rate applies.

SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

“Never let the odds keep you from doing what you know in your heart you were meant to do.” – H. Jackson Brown Jr.

Recently we were talking to a few of our referral partners about systemic advocacy. One of those present said (paraphrased) “no one in Springfield cares about what I have to say and besides, I don’t know how to begin to share my voice.” That is often what people think. NICIL believes that Springfield (meaning our elected officials) does want to know what we think and what we want, we are voters too! You do not have to have a fancy speech memorized or even a powerful letter, but you have to tell our elected officials what you want. If we don’t, then to elected officials, it means that we the people don’t care. No one can read someone else’s mind!

Call, write, and email your thoughts about all the issues at hand that affect your world and the world of people with disabilities. It is absolutely true that the funding is limited; it is absolutely true that there is more need for the people than there is dollars to go around and finally it is absolutely true that budgets need to be tightened. Where you can make a difference is letting elected officials know where you want the monies available to be spent. If they don’t hear from you, then, they will make the decisions for their votes on what they think is desired. Let your voice be heard!

It’s time to be heard, use your voice and make a difference. Visit the NICIL website and click on our Action in Advocacy page for the latest issue that needs your voice!

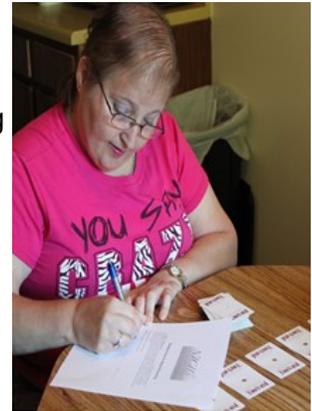
CONSUMER HIGHLIGHT

I would like to introduce you to Kari. She is a 46 year old young woman who transitioned into the community from Transitions Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Rock Falls, Illinois a couple years ago in NICIL's Money Follows the Person (MFP) Program. She has been very successful in living independently and states it is the best choice she has ever made.

Kari says the hardest part of making the move from the rehab center was in leaving behind her friends and in allowing her Personal Assistants to help her complete tasks. But once Kari got **the Independence Bug** she was off trying to do everything by herself and made several new friends. She has even ben brave enough to try things she never thought of doing before. Kari enjoys having her own space, her own home, a boyfriend, and her cat, Sassy. She spends time going to garage sales and visiting with her neighbors. Kari's next door neighbor says, Kari has been a great help to her. In fact, Kari's cat and the neighbor's dog are great friends as well. They both enjoy watching the 2 animals play.

Kari states what was the most helpful in getting her independence, was how everyone at NICIL pitched in to get her interviews with the Personal Assistants and all her shopping done for the things she needed

Kari states that she looks forward to taking more responsibility and control of her money, becoming her own payee instead of her mother.



STAFF BLOG-JULIE

I am always amazed by the ingenuity of people. There are people that are always thinking how can I do this better, faster, or just do something. I saw a machine that was built to solve the Rubik's Cube in just a couple of seconds, there was a machine that could split a log into 6 or 8 wedges all at the same time, we now have computers that fit on a desktop and phones that can go anywhere and do not weigh 6 pounds. I am a diabetic and have read articles about the first discoveries of insulin, about what it was like for people with diabetes to check their urine for sugar and washing and sterilizing needles and syringes. When I was diagnosed in 1987 there were blood sugar testing machines but you had to put the drop of blood on the strip, wait 5 minutes, wipe the drop off and then stick the strip in the machine for the strip to be read. Now the testing only takes a pinpoint drop of blood and five seconds to have a blood sugar reading. I use an insulin pump that is basically a small computer that is programed to mimic what a healthy body does, while this is not perfect it certainly makes my life much more normal. What will the future hold, hopefully a full fix for diabetes and other chronic medical diagnosis? Truly amazing!

FEATURED DISABILTY

April - June

We see many Awareness Ribbons and information on awareness of the month, but what do they mean?

April	May	June
Community Service Month	Arthritis Month	Hunger Awareness Month
Stress Awareness Month	Brian Tumor Month	Men's Health Month
Parkinson's Awareness Month	Mental Health Month	Chronic Venous Insufficiency Month

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month and a special shout out to the NICIL volunteers. We couldn't do it without you! We love our volunteers!

Be aware, be informed, use your voice, and take action!

DIRECTORS NOTE

30 years and counting!

Michael J. Fox

Michael J. Fox is an actor best known for his roles in Back to the Future movies and in the television shows Family Ties and Spin City. In 1991 Michael J. Fox was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Fox retired from full-time acting in 2000, but still makes an occasional appearance on screen or television. He is married with four children and an advocate of stem cell research..

*Northwest Illinois Center
for Independent Living*

NICIL

*The only disability
in life is a bad
attitude.*

Scott Hamilton

Many evenings after the team has left, the volunteers are gone, and the phones are quiet, I am still here at the office. The quiet is sometimes welcomed after a very busy day at our offices. At the same time it makes me wonder what these walls would say if they could talk. Would they reflect the amazing stories of our consumers, volunteers, and team members who have worked so hard to change the lives of others? Would they reflect the early years of the independent movement and the struggles for the rights of people with disabilities? Or would they simply reflect 30 years of hard work by so many people that we can't even begin to acknowledge their valuable contributions.

November 1985 was the time when Northwestern Illinois Center for Independent Living (affectionately known as NICIL) became one (1) of only five (5) Centers' in Illinois. The brave and dedicated people who made that happen started a foundation that has been evolving ever since. Thank you to each and every one who began NICIL and have been a part of our history ever since.

What is next for NICIL? That is a great question! If you have been watching any of the news since July 2015, you know the struggle that the State of Illinois has experienced. That struggle has been felt every day at NICIL. It was painful, difficult, a struggle, and a loss. We could continue to lament and complain and we would have good reason to do so, but that is not NICIL. NICIL is about supporting our consumers, changing our communities, making a difference each and every day. NICIL will respond with the dedication of our founders by working hard, harder than ever to deliver services to our consumers. NICIL will respond with innovations and programs that our consumers want. NICIL will respond and honor not only the independent living movement, our consumers, but the future where there is no more struggle for the rights of people with disabilities.

This is our legacy, we will continue to honor and learn from the past 30 years, but watch out! We will create new history with our stakeholders leading the way and NICIL being here to serve Northwestern Illinois every day. We invite you to be part of the new history, we are just beginning!

Goodsearch.com

Please consider using goodsearch.com and supporting us. All you have to do is make sure you are "supporting NICIL" and conduct a search (just like you would Google or Yahoo!) and a penny from each search is donated to us! For more information contact Jessica at 815-625-7860 ext 221 or jessica@nicil.org.