



PATHWAYS

Life without Limits for People with Disabilities

Public Policy Advocacy Successes

One very important part of UCP Michigan's work is advocacy. (See p. 3 of this issue for a celebration of advocacy.) UCP Michigan works with advocates from other disability, housing and senior groups, United Way, and land use advocates.

The results of collaboration can be very positive: recently we joined *Living in Michigan*, a coalition on affordable housing that advocates for funding for Michigan's Housing and Community Development Fund. The Legislature created the Fund in 2004 as a permanent fund to create additional affordable housing and to stimulate economic growth, but it was never funded. This year *Living in Michigan* members worked hard to show legislators the value of adding dollars to the Fund. As a coalition member, UCP contacted legislators and mounted a *GetActive Michigan* campaign urging our *GetActive* members to contact their legislators about the Fund. As we "go to press," the Legislature has appropriated and the Governor

approved the first \$2.163 million for the Fund! It's a good start, and we'll be back next year.

The Olmstead Coalition is another group in which disability and senior advocates work together on long term care, which is a huge issue now and will only get bigger as Baby Boomers become seniors. The Olmstead Coalition has had many successes, one of which was securing funding for transition out of nursing homes – to read more about transition, see p. 6.

A third example of collaboration is the new DVD, *Medicaid: Our Neighbors, Our Communities* in which people on Medicaid speak about its importance to them. The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council, its Health Issues Work Group (itself a collaboration of many individuals and groups) and UCP Michigan produced the DVD, but its heart is the voices and video of the individuals and families who use Medicaid. They are all truly our neighbors. You can see the DVD at www.getactivemichigan.org

United
Cerebral Palsy
of Michigan



Save the Date!

Saturday, February 9, 2008

7 pm - 11 pm

Fourth Annual

Baby Boomer Bash!

Dance to *The Seacruisers!*

Cadillac Club, Lansing

Hors d'oeuvres

Door Prizes

Tickets \$30

For reservations call:

800-828-2714

Credit Cards Accepted

Michigan a Leader in Cerebral Palsy Research

UCP Michigan is proud to help plan an invitational symposium for researchers on cerebral palsy to compare notes on current research and collaborate on future research. What you might not know is that many of the nation's leading experts on cerebral palsy are right here in Michigan. Dr. Mindy Aisen from the United Cerebral Palsy Research and Education Foundation in Washington D.C. will speak on funding for research, while others

will speak about causes of cp, advances in management of cp, and more. The planning committee includes Seth Warschausky, Ph. D. and Edward Hurvitz, M.D. from The University of Michigan, Nigel Paneth, M.D. and John Eulenberg, Ph.D. from Michigan State University, and Nancy Dodge, M.D. from Helen DeVos Children's Hospital in Grand Rapids. The symposium is set for March 13, 2008 at The Michigan League in Ann Arbor.

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From the Director

At UCP's national conference last year, I attended a workshop given by "cause marketing" researchers about "Millenials," the group of young adults up to age 25. "Cause marketing" refers to marketing "causes" such as disability rights and services, both by non-profits and companies. The workshop was fascinating. The researchers found that these young people are among the most socially active ever, probably because their lives have been filled with troublesome events - Oklahoma City, the World Trade Center, the tsunami, and worries about the future such as global warming.

The workshop meshed with my own thoughts about the need to get young people involved in United Cerebral Palsy as volunteers, employees and donors. Technology is racing along and offers terrific opportunities for community participation to people with disabilities. But keeping up with it as an organization is a challenge. As you know, we have a website, which we work hard to keep current and relevant. We also have *GetActiveMichigan.org*, a web-based tool each of us as individuals can use to contact our state and federal legislators about issues we care about strongly.

The workshop presenters urged UCP affiliates to use *Facebook* and *My Space*, two networking sites used primarily by young people, to reach out to them and to give them the opportunity to connect with us.

So we did it! We began a *Facebook* group called *Cerebral Palsy/Michigan*. It's not primarily about UCP Michigan: its goal is to give people with cerebral palsy and their friends and families a place to talk about cerebral palsy. Now our challenge is to let people know about it. If you want to join the group, go to our website's front page, which will tell you how to do it. Then, once you've joined, let all your friends know about it, so they can join too. Let's start a domino effect to connect people with an interest in cerebral palsy! Join *Cerebral Palsy/Michigan*!

Information presented in this newsletter is intended to provide people with current, accurate information about developments in treatment, education, technology and equipment, rehabilitation and therapy.

Reference in this newsletter to any particular practice does not constitute endorsement or promotion of that practice by UCP Michigan. Decisions to select any course of treatment should always be made by an individual after consultation with his or her professional provider.

Five Reasons UCP Michigan Needs Your Support

1) Your donations support our **Information and Referral Service**, through which we assist many people each and every month to find the disability resources they need.

2) Your financial support directly supports our **policy advocacy work** on behalf of people with disabilities.

3) Our ambitious plan to **broaden our impact throughout the state** depends on receiving financial support from our friends and supporters across the state.

4) Foundations and other institutions provide funding for specific projects, but we must turn to our generous donors for help with critical funding to sustain some of our **programs and our day-to-day operations**.

5) Your commitment and partnership in sharing our goals means a **better chance of living life without limits for all people with disabilities**, now and in the future.

To all our Friends, Supporters and Volunteers:

As we reflect on many things to be thankful for this year, we want to express our gratitude for your generous moral support and financial support of UCP Michigan's mission. You make a difference in the many lives we touch each year. Thank you!

Happy Thanksgiving from the Board and Staff of UCP Michigan!



UCP Michigan is Thankful for Advocacy!

What is an advocate?

The dictionary defines an advocate as “one who champions the cause of another.”

Advocates educate the public about important issues and suggest specific solutions.

Advocacy means actively supporting a cause AND trying to get others to support it as well.

Advocacy is the effort to change public perceptions. Advocacy influences policy decisions and funding priorities.

Advocacy promotes strategies, actions and solutions to influence decision-making at local, state and national levels to create positive change for people and their environment.

UCP Michigan’s advocacy mission is to promote, protect and defend the dignity, equality, and self-determination of people with disabilities. We advocate for justice in policies at the national and state level regarding civil rights of people with disabilities throughout Michigan.

UCP Michigan’s advocacy work helps to ensure that programs and policies relating to people with disabilities are enacted, funded, implemented, and sustained.

Progress- change for the better- will not happen without advocacy. Advocacy is the tool citizens in our democracy use to bring about improvements.

Advocacy is important because YOU are important!

- Despite society’s progress, people with disabilities still face discrimination and exclusion.
- In many instances, people with disabilities still do not have adequate access to buildings, support and health care services, transportation, affordable housing, and to their communities.
- Advocacy helps ensure that the rights of people with disabilities are upheld in the same way as everyone else’s.

Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA)

What is WIPA and what does it do?

WIPA stands for Work Incentives Planning and Assistance. It is a project funded by the Social Security Administration.

Its purpose is to help people who are receiving either Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI):

- to understand what will happen to their Social Security benefits and other benefits when they return to work, and
- to use Social Security and State work incentives.

What is a work incentive?

Social Security has special rules called work incentives to help people with disabilities prolong or maintain their benefits when they enter or return to the work force. These special rules are called work incentives. There are several work incentives available. It depends on your situation as to which work incentives will help you.

How does the project work?

A trained and certified Community Work Incentive Coordinator (CWIC) will sit down with you and gather information from you and from Social Security to help you understand your Social Security benefits and how to utilize the work incentives available to you. The CWIC will ask about your work history, address, date of birth, and disability.

Is this legal?

Yes. This project and the Work Incentives are legal. They are designed to give you an opportunity to go back to work and take advantage of work incentives to prolong or maintain benefits.

Can I work and still keep my Medicaid and Medicare benefits?

The government has started "Work Incentives" that let you keep Medicare and Medicaid benefits while you work. The CWIC will explain how this works.

How much will this service cost?

There is no cost to you.

Why would I want to do anything different?

By going to work, you will have more income. You will have more control over your life and feel less frustrated. It is shown that work makes a person feel better about themselves.

Who do I contact?

The state has been divided geographically between four WIPA projects.

United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan serves 58 Counties, which are divided between three CWICs:

Jack Anderson serves the following counties: Alger, Alpena, Antrim, Baraga, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Chippewa, Delta, Dickinson, Emmet, Gogebic, Houghton, Iron, Keweenaw, Luce, Mackinaw, Marquette, Menominee, Montmorency, Ontonagon, Otsego, Presque Isle, and School-

craft. Contact Jack Anderson at anderson@ucpmichigan.org or (888) 873-8812.

Lynn Ross serves the following counties: Alcona, Benzie, Crawford, Grand Traverse, Iosco, Kalkaska, Lake, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Missaukee, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Ogemaw, Osceola, Oscoda, Roscommon, and Wexford. Contact Lynn Ross at ross@ucpmichigan.org or (800) 211-1356.

Sara Stech serves the following counties: Arenac, Bay, Clare, Genesee, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Isabella, Midland, Saginaw, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, and Tuscola. Contact Sara Stech at (800) 828-2714 or stech@ucpmichigan.org.

The Arc Michigan serves the following counties: Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Cass, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Hillsdale, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lenawee, Livingston, Monroe, Ottawa, St. Joseph, Van Buren, and Washtenaw. Contact The Arc Michigan at (800) 292-7851.

UCP of Metro Detroit serves the following counties: Lapeer, Oakland and Macomb. Contact UCP of Metro Detroit at (800) 827-4843.

Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit serves Wayne County. Contact Goodwill Industries at (313) 964-3900.

Children's Special Health Care Services Insurance Premium Payment Benefit

Children's Special Health Care Services (CSHCS) is a program that pays health-related costs for eligible children up to age 20 with chronic health or disability conditions and for eligible adults with cystic fibrosis or certain blood clotting disorders.

CSHCS also has a benefit that can pay for all or part of its members' health insurance premiums. It may pay the premiums, including reimbursement of premiums deducted from paychecks of the parent, spouse or client, if a member or the member's family has access to private health insurance but cannot afford the premiums.

CSHCS may also pay the member or family's COBRA payment. COBRA is a federal law that requires employers of 20 or more persons to allow insured employees and their qualifying family members to stay in a group insur-

ance plan in certain situations. Qualifying situations include loss of a job or reduction of hours, divorce, death of the insured person, or loss of dependent child status. The length of coverage will vary from 18-36 months.

If you or your child gets CSHCS services and you cannot afford your employer health insurance or COBRA premiums, it is important that you notify your local health department CSHCS representative as soon as possible. Acting quickly is particularly important for COBRA as there is a short time period to sign up for it, and CSHCS does not want you to miss the opportunity.

CSHCS can only pay COBRA and other insurance premiums if doing so is cost effective, meaning that it must cost CSHCS less to pay the premiums than to pay for the services it gives the client. If CSHCS is paying your insurance

premiums, you must keep all Explanation of Benefits (EOBs) received from the your insurance company so CSHCS can determine if paying your premiums is cost effective.

People who are eligible for or have Medicare coverage (not Medicaid) may also get help from CSHCS with their Medicare premiums. People may qualify for Medicare coverage if they have end stage renal disease, they have received 24 consecutive months of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), or they are 65 years or older.

If you have questions about CSHCS, the Insurance Premium Payment benefit, or would like an application, call the CSHCS Family Phone Line at 800-359-3722. You can also get help from the CSHCS office of your local health department.

Why Giving Feels Good

There's a good feeling you get when you make a donation to your favorite charity. As



documented in an

article published in the June 15, 2007 issue of the journal, *Science*, brain scans showed that three very different situations — receiving money, seeing money go to a good cause, or deciding to donate money — all activated similar pleasure-related centers deep in the brain.

A team of psychologists and economists from the University of Oregon found that donating to charity activates a part of the brain associ-

ated with pleasure. Their study was supported by the National Institute of Health's National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Science Foundation.

In various experiments, researchers used magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), which maps the activity of different sections of the brain, with subjects who were asked to make voluntary donations. They found that the part of the brain activated when people made donations was the "reward center," that part of the brain that provides the euphoria associated with experiences such as eating good food or looking at photos of loved ones. In other words, the

studies indicated that making a financial contribution to a charity triggered the brain's pleasure center!

Economists have always tried to figure out the phenomenon of "unselfish altruism." Now it seems there may be a neurological reason for it: *It feels good to the brain!*

*Leave a Lasting Legacy
and Fund the Future:
Please remember
UCP Michigan in your
will or estate plan.*

Two Complete Marathon for UCP Michigan!

Neil Sauter from Blissfield, Michigan completed the Grand Rapids marathon October 28 **on stilts!** Neil walked to raise awareness about disabilities and as a fundraiser for UCP Michigan's Assistive Technology Loan Fund.

Neil has mild cerebral palsy and works with people with disabilities at The Hope Center in Adrian. He "moonlights" as a clown on stilts.

Neil decided to combine his interests to benefit a good cause: "I believe people with disabilities should have the chance to be able to lead productive lives, and United



Cerebral Palsy helps get that message out."

The UCP Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund enables people with disabilities to purchase technology that allows them to live more independent lives. A federal grant matches donations to the Loan Fund 3:1.

Bev Gengler from Flint also completed the Grand Rapids marathon as a fundraiser for UCP Michigan. She walked in honor of her 10 year old nephew Craig Numerich who has cerebral palsy.

Thank you and **congratulations** to Neil and Bev!

Picture of Bev Here

Transitioning *Out* of a Nursing Home

Many seniors and people with disabilities experience a time when they cannot live independently or when their existing system of supports is no longer sufficient for their needs. They enter a nursing home for a period of rehabilitation or because it is the only place immediately available. This is a story familiar to all of us.

What is less commonly known is that a nursing home does not need to be a lifelong move: many people who live in nursing homes can move out of them, either back to their own homes or to some other less institutional place. But because many of them have spent their savings on their care, they don't have money for things like secu-

rity deposits and furniture, and they don't have the ability to find housing and make all the other necessary arrangements, particularly if those arrangements include finding people to help them out at home. However, there are programs that will do the legwork to help people move out of nursing homes, including finding them housing (if their own home is gone) and other supports in the home, and that will even pay some of their costs to move and start over, if needed.

Barb Collins of Grand Rapids is a good example of someone who was helped to leave a nursing home. When Ms. Collins had a stroke, she was first in the hospital and then in a nursing

home for rehabilitation. She always wanted to live independently again with her cat, but didn't have the resources to do it herself. With the help of the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan, she enrolled in the MIChoice Waiver. The MIChoice program found her an apartment and furniture (and her cat), and helped her move in. Now Ms. Collins lives on her own in a senior apartment complex, and the only services she needs regularly are weekly housekeeping, Meals on Wheels, and a monthly home visit from a physician, all of which are provided by the MIChoice Waiver.

continued next page

Yes, I want to support UCP Michigan's goal of *Life without Limits for All People with Disabilities!*

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of \$_____. Please make check payable to UCP Michigan.

Or charge my Visa/Master Card: Card number:

Signature: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Donor Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

My gift is made:

In memory of In honor of Other occasion

Name: _____

Please send notification (your gift amount will not be disclosed) to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Thank you!

Please mail to:

UCP Michigan

3401 E. Saginaw, Suite 216

Lansing MI 48912

- Please send me information about Planned Giving/Bequests to UCP Michigan.**
- Please send me information about volunteering for UCP Michigan.**

Transitioning *continued*

The Michigan Department of Community Health gives each Area Agency on Aging (AAA) in the state (there are 21, covering the entire state) funding to assist nursing home residents on Medicaid to transition out of nursing homes into other settings of their choice (apartment, house, adult foster care, etc.). These funds are used not just to pay the salaries of the AAA staff who help with transition, but to help residents who need help with moving costs – things such as first and last month's rent, furniture, household goods, etc.

If you are not on Medicaid, getting help transitioning out of a nursing home may be more difficult. Michigan has four pilot Single Point of Entry (SPE) offices in Detroit, Western Michigan, Southwestern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula to help people navigate Michigan's long term care system. The SPE Options Counselors can help some individuals with transition before they become eligible for Medicaid. Some Centers for Independent Living will also help individuals who are not on Medicaid transition out of nursing homes.

Whether you are on Medicaid or not, if you are in a nursing home and want to move, or if someone you know wants to move out of a nursing home but you don't know how to make it happen, call your Area Agency on Aging to see if it can help you. To find the AAA in your area, visit www.mi-seniors.org, or call the Association of Area Agencies on Aging at (517) 886-1029. To find a Center for Independent Living in your area, go to www.dnmichigan.org or call (517) 339-0539.



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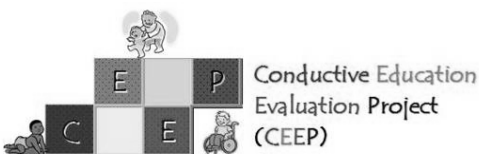


A member agency of United Way

Does Your Child Have Cerebral Palsy?

Are you interested in a free 4 week Conductive Education session at the Conductive Learning Center as part of a research study of children with Cerebral Palsy, ages 2 to 6?

Please Call Su at (888) 817-1731 for more information at the Department of Epidemiology, Michigan State University.



UCP Michigan Recognized by Senate

UCP Michigan received a special tribute from the Michigan Senate and Governor Granholm at the request of Senator Mark Jansen for National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October. UCP Michigan was recognized for its work to promote the independence and productivity of people with disabilities. Michigan has more than 290,000 working people with disabilities who make significant contributions to their communities every day. Senator Jansen also supported the Housing and Community Development fund, mentioned on p.1. Thank you, Senator!



UCP Michigan Executive Director
Linda Potter with Senator Mark Jansen