

OSCIL'S Signs of Independence

Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL)

Fall 2016

A Success!

OSCIL hosted Rhode Island's 2016 Independent Living Conference, entitled, "Options, Solutions, Choices, for Independent Living" on September 15, 2016 at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick.

One hundred and ninety participants joined in the day-long celebration of independence for persons having disabilities! The conference was "consumer based", offering workshops and vendor/exhibits that could provide increased information and access for individuals having disabilities. Many consumers attended and found workshops, vendors, keynote, and the "conference climate" to be very positive. Workshops addressed access and options including peer support sessions, entitled, "Life Goes On", "Communication Access for the Deaf" and "Managing Your PCA", as well as technical sessions that provided down-to earth solutions on how to use your iPhone, iPad and other popular devices.



Speaker, John Moon, from N.E.A.D.S (National Education for Assistance Dog Services) demonstrated how independence can be gained with the help from assistive animals. The vendors/exhibitors all provided valuable information and resources that many attendees found very helpful.

A special thank you to our wonderful sponsors and raffle donors: Hamilton Relay, the YMCA, the MS Foundation and a very generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Mark your calendar—Many conference attendees expressed interest in attending another conference next year. Evaluation results confirmed the positive response. Based on this excitement, OSCIL has secured the Crowne Plaza for OSCIL's 2017 IL Conference which will be on September 14, 2017. *SAVE THAT DATE!*

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OSCIL Staff Members Attend NCIL Conference in Washington DC

The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) is the longest-running national cross-disability, grassroots organization run by and for people with disabilities.

Their vision is to see a world in which people with disabilities are valued equally and participate fully. The theme was: Solidarity - Everybody In! OSCIL was fortunate to send seven staff members to this conference. In order to gain as much knowledge as possible, they divided themselves and attended various workshops.

Some workshops included: legislative issues, advocacy, disability solidarity, advocating for housing, deinstitutionalization and more.

There was a march to Capitol Hill that was as emotional as it was powerful.

OSCIL's own Heather Schey summed it up by saying, "the NCIL Conference gave us the opportunity to not only learn new things, but also the opportunity to advocate and bond with others".



L-R: OSCIL Staff: Michelle Machado, Brian Nichols, Matt DeLillo, Gloria Stuart, Heather Schey, Helen Iasimone & Tim Flynn

Attention Visually Impaired

Are you having family and friends read your mail? Would you like to continue to enjoy hobbies or games with children or grandchildren?

Assistive devices such as lighted magnifying machines may allow you to read or do these activities. Equipment such as talking calculators, clocks, thermostats, scales, and even talking can lids, as well as advanced magnifiers, can greatly increase your independence.

OSCIL has funding available to support the purchase of assistive devices and other equipment for those who are visually impaired. The goal is to make you more independent in your home and community. For more information, call OSCIL at 738-1013 ext. 13. Income guidelines apply.

ASL Practice Group

ASL practice groups are held on the last Wednesday of every month from 7 to 8pm at Brewed Awakenings located at 1316 Bald Hill Road in Warwick. This is a practice group, therefore your level of skill is not important. Next coffee hours are 10/26, 11/30 and 12/28.

Mention of any product, service, or event in this newsletter does not constitute any endorsement or recommendation by OSCIL.

Voter Hotline

If you face barriers to voting or have questions about access to voting or voting rights, please contact the RI Disability Law Center's Voter Hotline at: 831-3150 or 831-5335.

Hope after Stroke

Southern New England Rehabilitation Center at Fatima Hospital holds monthly meetings for survivors of stroke, their caregivers and family. Next Meetings: November 14, and December 12 from 3-4pm. Call 456-3900 for questions.

OSCIL on Facebook

Did you know that we have a Facebook page? To keep up with what's going at OSCIL and with the disability community in Rhode Island, "Like" our page. You can find our page by searching for "OSCIL" in the Facebook search bar. Feel free to share with anyone you feel may be interested in learning more about us.

Sign Up For OSCIL Email List

OSCIL has an email listserv to keep our consumers, friends and the community informed of upcoming news and events. If you would like to be included on this list, please visit our website at www.oscil.org and click on the "email sign-up" link and enter your name and email address and click "subscribe".

Hardest Hit Fund

The Hardest Hit Fund Rhode Island (HHFRI) is a U.S. Treasury-funded effort to assist Rhode Island homeowners hardest hit by the foreclosure crisis.

The program is available to eligible homeowners with a documented hardship. The funding is intended to:

- Prevent foreclosures
- Stabilize the housing market in Rhode Island
- Keep families in their homes

Homeowners who are unemployed can contact the *Hardest Hit Fund RI* Center at 277-1500 directly to set an appointment to begin the application process.

Homeowners with hardships other than unemployment should seek assistance from a HUD-approved HHFRI certified counseling agency such as the Rhode Island Housing HelpCenter.

Services at the HelpCenter are free. Rhode Islanders are encouraged to call 1-800-427-5560 at the first sign of having difficulty making a mortgage payment.

Keep the Heat On

Keep the Heat On is a program sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence that provides heating assistance to Rhode Islanders with no place left to turn for help.

Applications will be accepted beginning in November. Call 421-7833 ext. 207 or log onto www.heatri.com for additional information.

Applicants must demonstrate ineligibility for other federal, state, and private assistance.

LIHEAP

The Low Income Heating And Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which helps pay for heating and energy bills, runs from November 1 through March 31st.

People who received LIHEAP last year should be receiving a renewal application in the mail. Those who want to apply for the first time should call their local Community Action Program (CAP) Agency or call OSCIL for more information.

OSCIL WILL BE HOLDING A FLU CLINIC ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2016
during our Lunch & Learn Workshop.
Bring your insurance card!

Good Neighbor Energy Fund

This fund is a statewide cooperative effort between electric and gas companies and The Salvation Army.

In order to be eligible, you cannot qualify for, or receive any other energy assistance, including the LIHEAP program, and the hardship must be temporary.

This fund is able to help meet a month's energy expense. Applications will be taken beginning in November. Call 490-0240 to apply.

The Flu Vaccine May Benefit People With Diabetes

A study conducted over the past seven years, and posted in The New York Times, suggests that the flu vaccine may reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease for those with Type 2 diabetes. When researched, people who received the flu vaccine and had Type 2 diabetes, had a 30% lower risk for stroke and a 22% lower risk of heart failure.

Ask your doctor if the flu vaccine may have extra benefits for you if you have Type 2 diabetes.

*OSCIL will be holding a Flu Clinic on October 26th from 12-2 pm.
Bring your insurance card.*

The Special Needs Emergency Registry

The *Special Needs Emergency Registry* was developed by The Rhode Island Department of Health and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency to assist adults and children with chronic conditions, disabilities and special healthcare needs during emergencies. Those who may benefit include:

- **persons using oxygen, respirator, ventilator, dialysis, pacemaker or are insulin dependent**
- **those with mobility disabilities**
- **the visually impaired or deaf with speech, cognitive, developmental or mental health disabilities**
- **those who have assistive animals**

By completing a registry form for yourself or a family member, the information will be shared with state and local emergency responders.

Registration may be completed online at www.health.ri.gov/emregistry or call 946-9996/RI Relay711 (TTY) to request a form. Completed forms can be mailed to:

**RIEMA
Database Manager
645 New London Ave.
Cranston, RI 02920**

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT 2017

Fall is open enrollment for Medicare. The time to make changes to your health and drug coverage is October 15 to December 7. You will soon be receiving your 2017 Medicare and You handbook and the annual Notice of Change letters along with a benefit summary. In order to understand what you are reading you must know some basic information about Medicare.

Medicare is the nation's health insurance program for people 65 and older, or younger people who are disabled and those with end stage renal disease. The four parts of Medicaid will be simplified here.

PART A - Covers inpatient hospital care, skilled nursing facilities, home health and hospice care. In most cases there is no cost but may have a co-pay or deductible.

PART B - This is optional insurance. It covers physician services, outpatient hospital services, home health, durable medical equipment, laboratory and x rays, and ambulance as well as other services. Those enrolled in part B have a monthly premium.

PART C - This is optional. Also known as Medicare Advantage Plan. By joining this plan you agree to receive services and supplies from a network established by that plan. Costs and coverage vary.

PART D - This plan may be purchased to assist with prescription costs. Both generic and brand name medications are covered.

If you choose a Medicare Advantage Plan, you must be enrolled in Part B for your healthcare coverage, your Part D plan must be purchased from the same company. Lastly, there is a Medicare supplement insurance, also referred to as Medigap insurance. This private health insurance is designed to supplement Medicare benefits. These insurances have monthly premium fees.

For more information about Medicare, call 1-800-633-4227, or go online to medicare.gov. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Upcoming Community Events

Trinity Rep Open Captioned Performances

Trinity Repertory Theater has announced the Open Captioned performances lineup for the upcoming 2016-17 season.

- The Mountaintop – Sun., Jan 15 at 2pm
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – Sun., Feb. 12 at 2pm

Tickets: \$25. To order tickets call 351-4242 or email Trinity at boxoff@trinityrep.com.

Assistive Technology Conference of New England

Rhode Island's annual conference offers workshops, exhibits and product information on technology for persons with disability in all aspects of their lives. November 17 & 18 – 8:30 – 3:30 Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI. For more information contact TechAccess at 463-0202 or visit the web site www.assistivetechconference.com

OSCIL LUNCH & LEARN WORKSHOPS

Wednesday, October 26 12-2pm

*** FLU CLINIC ***

Topic: *The Challenges of Using Public Transportation.* Staff from the Rhode Island Organizing Project (RIOP) will be present to lead a discussion and hear about the challenges of using public transportation. Items for discussion include Logisticare and the campaign to save the RIPTA No Fare Bus Pass among others.

*****THERE WILL BE A FLU CLINIC DURING THIS EVENT—BRING INSURANCE CARD.**

Wednesday, November 30 12-2pm

Topic: *Apps For Blind/Low Vision and Physical Impairments.* This workshop will be a hands on sharing session, so come with your iPhone charged and share your favorite apps that assist you with daily independence/communications.

Wednesday, December 14 12-2 pm ***Holiday gifts*** that can help a loved one be more independent in their home or community—Our top 10 most-requested items will be shared and resource information given as to where to purchase them. Join us for a holiday lunch to hear how assistive devices can assist you and/or your loved one.

Location: OSCIL 1944 Warwick Ave. Warwick. Call 738-1013 to register. Seating is limited. Pizza will be served. Sign Language interpreters & CART have been secured.



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Website: www.oscil.org

Fall 2016
Newsletter

Return Service Requested

OSCIL'S New Programs

Youth Transition Program

The mission this new program is to help provide the necessary independent living skills and real life experiences for 11th and 12th grade students, as well as recent graduates, who face physical access barriers as they enter the post high school world. We plan to do that by meeting with students and creating individualized goals which will then correspond with related workshops and community outings based on their goals. We have already established connections at five schools throughout four districts; Warwick, Coventry, Chariho, and Westerly. We are very excited and can't wait to see this program prosper across the State. For more information call 738-1013 and ask for Matt.

OSCIL/YMCA Partnership

OSCIL is partnering with the YMCA in a new initiative to enable those who qualify to receive a special membership rate to participate in YMCA programs. OSCIL will provide the opportunity for persons having significant disability to address independent living goals related to health and wellness, increasing recreational and socialization experiences and peer support. More information will be coming soon to our website, www.oscil.org and Facebook page.