



Independence Now, Inc.

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INTOUCH

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Independence Now is the Center for Independent Living for
Montgomery and Prince George's Counties

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Maryland Celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

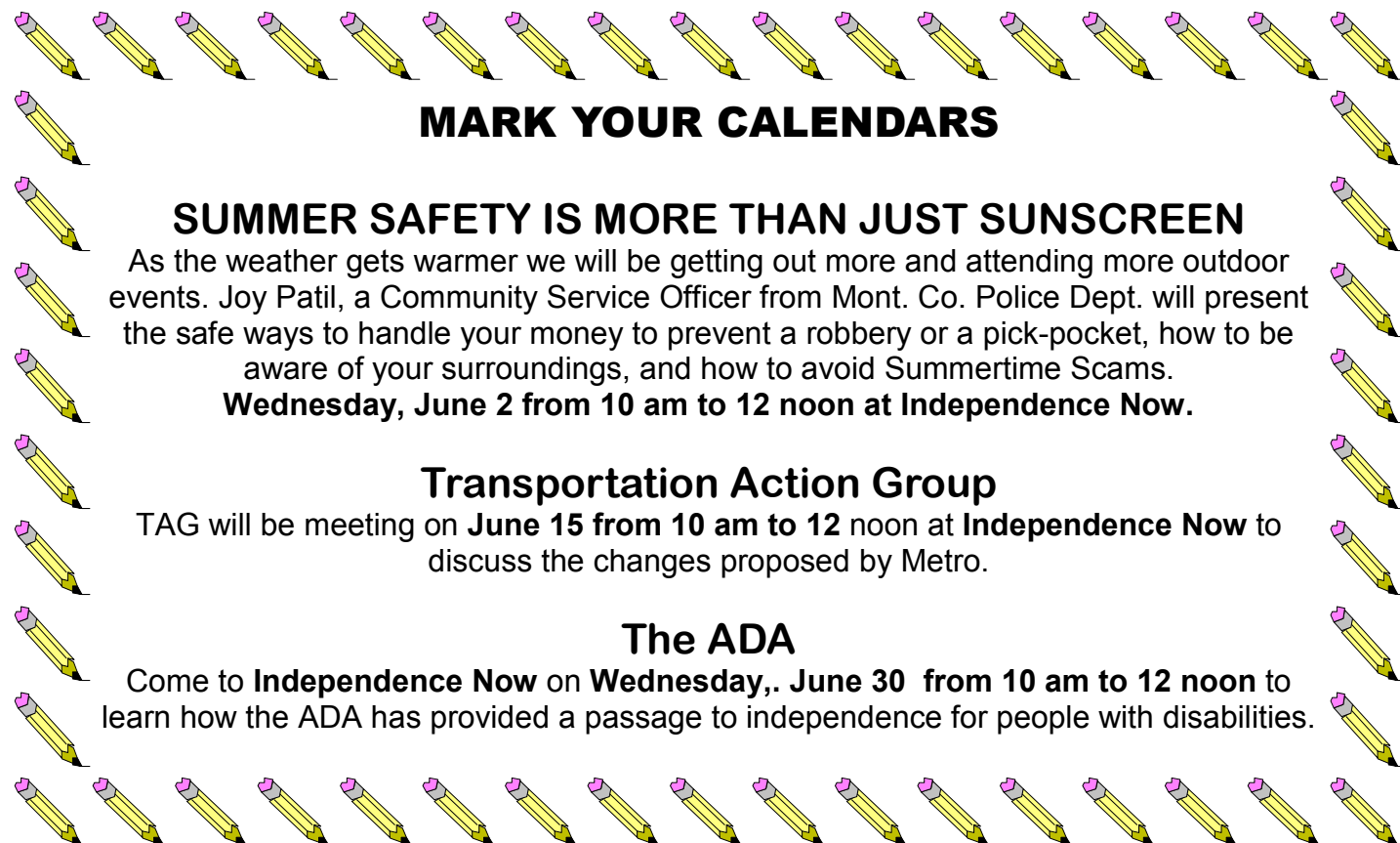
In January, Governor Martin O'Malley recognized the 20th anniversary of the American with Disabilities Act stating that the ADA was "landmark legislation that protected the civil rights of individuals with disabilities and ensured that more than 54 million Americans received the same basic freedoms – independence, equal access, freedom of choice and inclusion – afforded to every citizen in our country." In the proclamation, he encouraged everyone to participate in and promote events throughout the State that celebrate the rights and abilities of individuals with disabilities.

On Friday, January 29, Senator Jennie Forehand and Delegate Sue Kullen, sponsors for resolutions in the Senate and the House of Delegates respectively, made special floor presentations recognizing the significance of the ADA and the impact the legislation has made on the lives of individuals with disabilities. The resolutions, which honored Marylanders with disabilities, were presented to Catherine A. Raggio, Maryland Secretary of the Department of Disabilities and Andrew D. Levy, Chair of the Maryland Commission on Disabilities.

In addition to the Governor's proclamation and the Senate and House resolutions, a variety of events and activities will be held across the State during the year 2010. These include the State's annual Americans with Disabilities Act celebration on July 26, 2010 and Disability History and Awareness Month in October.

The Americans with Disabilities Act, which was signed into law on July 26 1990, was landmark legislation to protect the civil rights of individuals with disabilities. The American with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA), a major civil rights bill expanding protections for people with disabilities and overturning several Supreme Court decisions issued in the last decade, was signed into law in September 2008. Maryland Congressman Steny Hoyer was the chief sponsor of the bill in the House of Representatives. Supporters of the proposal said it would restore the broad protections that Congress meant to establish when it passed the Americans With Disabilities Act in 1990. The ADAAA provides protection for people with epilepsy, diabetes, cancer, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis and other disabilities; protection that had been improperly denied because their conditions could be controlled by medication or were in remission.

To receive a copy of the Governor's proclamation, call the Maryland Department of Disabilities at 410-767-3660.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

SUMMER SAFETY IS MORE THAN JUST SUNSCREEN

As the weather gets warmer we will be getting out more and attending more outdoor events. Joy Patil, a Community Service Officer from Mont. Co. Police Dept. will present the safe ways to handle your money to prevent a robbery or a pick-pocket, how to be aware of your surroundings, and how to avoid Summertime Scams.

Wednesday, June 2 from 10 am to 12 noon at Independence Now.

Transportation Action Group

TAG will be meeting on **June 15 from 10 am to 12 noon at Independence Now** to discuss the changes proposed by Metro.

The ADA

Come to **Independence Now** on **Wednesday, June 30 from 10 am to 12 noon** to learn how the ADA has provided a passage to independence for people with disabilities.



Share Our Strength's **Operation Frontline Program**, facilitated locally by the **Capital Area Food Bank** connects families with food by teaching them how to prepare healthy, tasty meals on a limited budget. Professional chefs and nutritionists volunteer their time and expertise to lead hands-on courses that teach adults, teens, and children how to get the most nutrition out of a limited budget.

Independence Now (IN) is joining with the **Capital Area Food Bank** to offer the **Operation Frontline** program's Eating Right class series for adults — a 6 weeks-long course for one day a week, 2 hours each day. A Prep Class conducted by IN staff will be on Tuesday, May 11 from 11 am to 1 pm and will brief attendees on the upcoming course that will run every Friday from June 18 to July 23 from 11 am to 1 pm. (Attendees must be able to commit to the entire 6 week course.) Also, on May 11th staff will share alternative appliances for cooking quick and easy meals with a "brunch in a crunch" demonstration.

During the course in June, each week there is a new focus from the benefits of eating a variety of food to food safety and grocery shopping on a budget. All the participants receives the curriculum – it is full of handouts with cooking and nutrition tips. There are also a wide variety of recipes included in the book and other bonuses throughout the course.

A consumer's thoughts:

It's tough being a citizen in this world today! Especially if you are "Disabled". People tend to judge you in a very negative way.

Being disabled has it's advantages & disadvantages. The advantages of being disabled are having accessibility into a majority of government facilities, restaurants, movie theaters, free rides on Metro busses & trains, and malls. There are also people who are willing to assist in the time of need.

The disadvantages of being disabled are that people automatically form a negative opinion about how we are and most of all-people don't give us a fair chance in life, to prove ourselves. No no-one is perfect-we make mistakes, but who doesn't.

Having a challenge in life brings about a change of one's heart. You can become better or bitter. Try not to focus on the negative side of the situation. Focus on what you can make positive in your life and others around you.

Believe you me, I have had some challenges to face and none of them were easy. I was born with Cerebral Palsy. Before I was born, my mother came in contact with someone who had German Measles which resulted as a rash on my face and other parts of my body. So of course people stare not just because of the way I walk but also what's on my face. The doctors always said I would never walk-but what they didn't know that I was also born with determination and a Tomboyish attitude. I ran, played football, drive, skate -- you name it. I accomplished the impossible.

Since 2000, I have been diagnosed with Sarcoidosis and Diabetes and have spent months in rehab for paralysis.

So yes, I know about challenges. Anything in life can be accomplished even as a disabled person-just know and believe it, no matter what society has to say.

Tonya L. Davis



WOMEN'S GROUP — Montgomery County Commission on Women
Ivonne C. Lindley of Steinberg and Sperling law firm will be talking about the kind of services the Mont. Co. Commission on Women offer.
RSVP to Rochelle Harrod at 301-277-2839 or at rharrod@innow.org
When: Monday, May 3rd from 12 to 2 PM **Where: Independence Now**



CREATIVE COOKING — The Prep Course
This prep class will prepare attendees for the 6 weeks Creative Cooking Classes that will start in June. This class will introduce you to safety and accessibility in the kitchen and different types of appliances.
RSVP to Wes Young at 301-277-2839 or at wyoung@innow.org.
When: Tuesday, May 11th from 11AM to 1PM **Where: Independence Now**



MEN'S GROUP—Self-worth and having a disability
Discussion on how to understand what your self-worth is and what affect your disability may have on it. **RSVP** to Wes Young at 301-277-2839 or at wyoung@innow.org
When: Friday, May 14th from 1 to 3 PM **Where: Independence Now**



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
Bill Delaney, Program Manager from Mont. Co. Fire & Rescue, will provide instruction on getting prepared for emergencies. For the millions of Americans with mobility problems, emergencies such as fires and floods present a special challenge. Protecting yourself and your family when disaster strikes requires planning ahead.
RSVP to Rochelle Harrod or Wes Young at 301-277-2839.
When: Wednesday, May 19th from 1 to 3 PM **Where: Independence Now**



MEET & GREET — St Thomas More Nursing Facility
Come and join Rochelle and Wes at St. Thomas More. We will be playing games and having a snack. It'll be a PARTY!
When: Thursday, May 20th from 2:30 to 3:30 pm
Where: St. Thomas More Nursing & Rehab Center, 4922 La Salle Rd, Hyattsville MD



MOVIE ADVOCACY NIGHT — Daredevil
Although attorney Matt Murdock (Ben Affleck) is blind, his other four senses function with super-human sharpness. By day, Murdock represents the downtrodden. At night he is Daredevil, a masked vigilante stalking the dark streets of the city, a relentless avenger of justice. Join us for a free movie, dinner and a discussion after the movie.
Please contact Rochelle by May 16th if you need accommodations.
RSVP to Rochelle Harrod at 301-277-2839 or at RHarrod@innow.org
When: Tuesday, May 25th from 6 – 9 pm **Where: Independence Now**



HOUSING INFORMATION SEMINAR — The Fair Housing Act
This months seminar will include the video **Time for Fair Housing** and a discussion of the Fair Housing Act. Get in touch with Wes Young at 301-277-2839 or at WYoung@innow.org for information.
When: Thursday, May 27th from 1-- 3 pm **Where: Independence Now**



MAY 2010



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
National Arthritis Month National Mental Health Month National High Blood Pressure Education Month National Lupus Awareness Month Better Hearing and Speech Month						1
2	3 Women's Group 12—2 pm	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Creative Cooking The Prep Course 11 am - 1 pm	12	13	14 Men's Group 1—3 pm	15
16	17	18	19 Emergency Readiness For People with Disabilities 1—3 pm	20 Meet & Greet St Thomas More 2:30—3:30 pm	21	22
23	24	25 Movie Advocacy Night Daredevil 6—9 pm	26	27 Housing Seminar The Fair Housing Act 1—3 pm	28	29
30	31					

Services at Independence Now (IN)

Money Follows the Person

A statewide initiative to help people move out of nursing homes back into the community. IN part is to talk with Medicaid eligible residents in nursing facilities in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, providing information on their options and choices.

The MD-YLF

The Maryland Youth Leadership Forum is a yearly event held every summer at Bowie State University for High School students with disabilities. During the week long event, the 30 students learn about self advocacy, leadership, and disability rights, while learning to live in a dorm away from home with other students throughout the state.

Benefits INfoSource

A free service which provides information and referral benefits planning and assistance to persons receiving disability benefits from Social Security and who want to explore returning to work. They can also provide information on SSA updates about disability benefits and conduct training sessions on the use of work incentives.

Independent Living Services

Like all CILs, IN offers four core services to its consumers. These services include:

- ◆ Peer mentoring and support
- ◆ Independent Living Skills Training
- ◆ Information and Referral Services
- ◆ Individual and Systems Advocacy

Services are free and consumer driven. We assist residents of Montgomery and Prince George's counties to use community services and resources that will enhance their independence.

Travel Training

This program is specifically for people with disabilities to expose them to alternate modes of transportation that put them in control of their own travel plans fostering more independence. Travel Trainers will teach residents in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties how to use Metro's fixed-route public bus and rail transportation services.

IN Focuses on Youth: New & Existing Programs Seeks Teens

Since the newly minted Travel Training program is up and running, Independence Now (IN) is continuing to expand the center's services to young people as they transition into adulthood.

The **Independent Living Services**, **Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)** and **Travel Training** programs share the mutual goal of making sure that independence and self-empowerment happens sooner, rather than later in the lives of disabled youths. IN hopes that these programs networking together will be a win-win for the consumers and their parents, whose needs for early independence are being addressed in a more comprehensive way.

To enroll youths in these programs, or for more information, call 301-277-2839. For Independent Living Services ask for Wes Young, for Montgomery County or Rochelle Harrod, for Prince George's County; for Y L F ask for Kim Wilhelm and for travel training ask for Georgia Smith or Damian Gregory.