

New Horizons

Housing | nat Supports Independence

35th anniversary



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Our 2019 Golf Outing In Pictures

On May 20th, a beautiful spring day, Project Freedom held it's annual golf tourney at Cobblestone Creek Country Club. Thanks go to our generous sponsors for making this an outstanding event every year.



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“My Two Cents”

By *Tim Doherty, Executive Director*



I thought that I would give my readers an update on our latest housing efforts, as our team has been very busy these past few months.

As many of you know, we have been under construction on our West Windsor community for about nine months now, however with all of the rain we have had the project is about three months behind schedule. We hope to make up some of that time during this Spring, but again, rain and other issues continue to impede our progress. Our plan was to get two apartment buildings by June 30, as well as the Community Center, with the remaining four buildings by the end of October. All that has slipped another month, so it looks like maybe July 31 for those early buildings. This can happen in new construction so we just need to “go with the flow” and hope for the best. Obviously we can’t start leasing unit those units receive CO (Certificate of Occupancy).

Our Gibbsboro development has managed better with only a thirty day delay in the overall schedule so far. There we have three buildings under roof with the fourth and Community Center now getting footings and foundations. Once that is done, the walls go up pretty quickly, so that project could be completed at the same time as West Windsor community.

Both projects are for 72 rental apartments each, with a community center for staff and tenant activities. For West Windsor, we held a Lottery in April and drew on over four hundred applications for 72 units. We are only now scheduling the lottery for Gibbsboro for sometime in October. We also have many applications already in house for that community, even though we have not as yet advertised. So, both communities show a great need for our housing design within their respective communities.

In addition, we hope to break ground once again, in Robbinsville soon for another housing community. Last year we won the Tax Credits for what is to be known as “ Freedom Village at Town Center”, another four apartment building design totaling 72 units. This site is exceptionally good, in that it is in the heart of Town Center and will provide anyone who uses a wheelchair, the opportunity to access all that Town Center has to offer. When completed, this will be an outstanding housing community.

Finally, again we have plans for another project in Hamilton Township, across from the Library and Police Station on Sam Alito Way. This project will be located on seven and a half acres of township owned land, which has laid dormant for many years. As part of Hamilton Township’s Affordable Housing plan, we hope to create again, 72 units of barrier-free rental apartments all of which will be affordable. This project is a win-win for all, since Hamilton Township can reimburse itself for the appraised value of the land by using the affordable housing trust fund.

So these four new projects will add over 288 more barrier free rental apartments so that people who use a wheelchair can live independently. Our Mission continues.

From Norman's Desk



For most of my life and well into adulthood, June represented the end of school and the beginning of the Summer season. Even after leaving college too many years ago, June felt like the end of a period of intense work.

More recently, as my readers are keenly aware, June became my month to remind everyone to be prepared for Hurricane Season, which “officially” begins June 1.

Much more recently, June has been the month to write about being a father. I have only celebrated Fathers’ Day 10 times as a father before this year. Celebrating the day as a father is far different than celebrating as a son with my father. For one thing, a son is trying to show his Dad his love and appreciation that he feels for him while the Dad wants to show his son (or daughter) the wonderment and pride of being Dad. Being Dad to any child is wonderful and awesome. Father’s Day is the icing on the proverbial cake.

Fatherhood and Motherhood can be daunting and pleasurable at the same time. Every parent knows this mixture of feelings. I think, however, those of us with obvious disabilities also feel an additional mixture of emotions. Indeed, there is pride of your child and pride of being a parent when others think you should not or cannot be a parent.

There is also the apprehension of being judged by others because you have a child and a disability. Your capabilities and skills as a parent are constantly being scrutinized to see if, indeed, you can take care of your child. This scrutiny is always in the back of your mind as you try to let your child experience what other children experience.

This is the unfortunate price we pay by being parents with disabilities. Years ago the White House sponsored a conference on parenting with disabilities because more people with disabilities are paying that price nationally. The price can be minimal for some, higher for others, but well worth it to hear your son say “Happy Fathers’ Day, Dad!”

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Hiring People With Disabilities Is Good Business

Microsoft, Bank of America and CVS are just a few big companies that profit from their proactive employment practices. By Ted Kennedy Jr./ Reprinted from The NY Times / Dec. 27, 2018

When it comes to employment, we have failed to live up to the promise of the Americans With Disabilities Act.

For years, companies have maintained low expectations about hiring people with disabilities. Most of these companies believed that employees with disabilities could not perform well in the workplace and that actively hiring them would drag company performance and profits down.

Thankfully, over time, many employers have come to understand that these perceptions are untrue. And new research strongly suggests that the opposite — that hiring people with disabilities is good for business.

A recent study has shown, for the first time, that companies that championed people with disabilities actually outperformed others — driving profitability and shareholder returns. Revenues were 28 percent higher, net income 200 percent higher, and profit margins 30 percent higher. Companies that improved internal practices for disability inclusion were also four times more likely to see higher total shareholder returns.

These findings, presented in a report from Accenture, in partnership with Disability: IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities, give companies a new reason to hire people with disabilities. The results are based on an analysis of the financial performance of 140 companies that averaged annual revenues of \$43 billion and participated in the Disability Equality Index, an annual benchmarking tool that objectively rates company disability policies and practices.

But it was only when I went to college in the 1970s that I came of age politically and really thought about the issue of disability rights. It happened after I heard Judith Heumann, a disability rights advocate who contracted polio as an infant, give a speech and call disability a civil rights issue. I'd never heard that comparison before. I realized that millions of disabled people were unjustly being left out of daily life. Ms. Heumann inspired me to become an advocate myself.

I committed myself to this cause because of people like Joseph Pabin. He graduated from college with a degree in computer science and a 3.5 grade point average, an impressive résumé that easily got him in the door for job interviews. But once he showed up, interviewers noticed his speech impediment and told him they doubted he could successfully interact with customers. Mr. Pabin looked for a full-time job for three years without finding one, and his self-esteem plummeted. Ultimately, he contacted Bender Consulting Services, a career placement company that recruits, screens and hires people with disabilities for professional positions with private sector and government employers. Highmark offered him a full-time position in information technology. He has thrived at the company, working directly with customers, for four years now.

As we head into the new year, it's important to recognize how far we've come. Twenty-eight years ago, the Americans With Disabilities Act was passed, prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities. I still remember standing alongside my father in the Rose Garden watching President George H.W. Bush sign the bill into law, forever engraving it into his legacy. But when it comes to employment, a cornerstone of the American dream, we have failed to live up to the promise of this historic law. Many employers have yet to recognize that people with disabilities can contribute economically if sought out and accommodated. Americans with disabilities — a population of 50 million people, more than one in every five — still face numerous challenges in entering and participating in the work force.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 29 percent of Americans ages 16 to 64 with a disability were employed as of June 2018, compared with nearly 75 percent of those without a disability. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities who are actively seeking work is 9.2 percent — more than twice as high as for those without a disability (4.2 percent). The United States labor market is at its strongest in decades, and possibly ever. But all too many people with disabilities remain without jobs. The Accenture analysis reveals this inspiring statistic: Hiring only 1 percent of the 10.7 million people with disabilities has the potential to boost the G.D.P. by an estimated \$25 billion.

Once companies are aware of these potential economic benefits, they should be motivated to bring persons with disabilities into the work force to thrive as never before. Hiring them also gives companies fresh insights into developing and marketing products and services that meet the needs and preferences of consumers with disabilities — the third-largest market segment in the United States, according to the Office of Disability Employment Policy. To start, corporations should participate in the Disability Equality Index.

As a New Year's resolution for corporate America, it's hard to do better than to pledge to hire people with disabilities. Yes, we can do it because it always feels good to do what's right. But now it turns out that reaching this next frontier for corporate social responsibility is also good business.

Ted Kennedy Jr., a Democratic state senator in Connecticut, is a health care lawyer and civil rights activist for people with disabilities and chairman of the American Association of People With Disabilities.



Hamilton Happenings

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
6-Jun	Thu	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
18-Jun	Tue	Hamilton Games	Prog. Time 3:00 -5:30 PM



Lawrence Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
5-Jun	Wed	Massages	Sign up
6-Jun	Thu	Hamilton/Lawrence Shopping	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
12-Jun	Wed	Nutrition	7 PM
13-Jun	Thu	Lawrence Community Concert - 7 PM	Bus Leaves PFR 5:00 PM
19-Jun	Wed	Nutrition/Conscious Eating Dinner	5-9 PM
20-Jun	Thu	Happy Hour Music with Meg Hanson	5-7 PM





Robbinsville Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
10-Jun	Mon	"Day-Rec Program" -- Robbinsville	Prog. Time 2 PM-4 PM
12-Jun	Wed	Robbinsville Father's Day Crafts	Prog. Time 6:30 - 9:00
17-Jun	Mon	"Day-Rec Program" -- Robbinsville	Prog. Time 2 PM-4 PM
28-Jun	Fri	Robbinsville Gardening & Concert	Prog. Time 6:30 - 'til Dusk

On Monday, May 6, members of Girl Scout Troop 21025 from Tangled Web Service Unit came to Robbinsville and pulled over 20 bags of weeds from the flower beds and around the sign on the front lawn. Beautiful job, girls! (and guys!)



Hopewell Events

DATE	DAY	PROGRAM (in Community Room)	TIME
6/4/19	Tue	Mercer County Election Polling	All Day
6/5/19	Wed	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	1:15 PM to 3:15 PM
6/7/19	Fri	Mercer Home Health Hosting Pokeno	3:00 PM
6/20/19	Thu	Heart to Hearts Chair Massage	9:30 AM to 11:30 AM

Effort Underway To Expand Access To Respite Care

by Shaun Heasley | Reprinted from DisAbility Scoop April 22, 2019



Lawmakers are looking to dramatically increase federal funding to support respite care for families of those with disabilities and other special needs.

A bipartisan bill introduced this month known as the Lifespan Respite Care Reauthorization Act of 2019, or H.R.2035, would tag \$200 million over the next five years to boost respite care services across the country.

The legislation is an effort to reauthorize an existing law that's been on the books since 2006 while adding significant investment. Under the measure, \$20 million would be authorized for fis-

cal year 2020 and then funding would increase by \$10 million per year, ultimately reaching \$60 million in fiscal year 2024.

That's substantially more than the \$2.5 million allocated by Congress annually since 2009.

"Caring for a loved one in need can be incredibly rewarding, but it can also take a physical, emotional and financial toll on families," said U.S. Rep. Jim Langevin, D-R.I., who introduced the House of Representatives version of the bill.

"Respite care provides temporary relief from the full-time task of family caregiving and is one of the support services most frequently requested by family caregivers. By expanding access to respite services, this legislation will improve caregiver health and reduce the financial strain on families, our health care system and the taxpayer."

There are estimated to be over 40 million Americans providing care to loved ones with various disabilities or health conditions, lawmakers said. Under the existing law, the federal government has provided grants to 37 states and Washington, D.C. to streamline the delivery of services, coordinate resources and offer training to respite providers and family caregivers.

Jill Kagan, director of the ARCH National Respite Coalition which helps administer the federal government's respite care efforts, said they are working to bring the program to every state. In addition to Langevin, the House bill is sponsored by Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash. A Senate version was introduced by Sens. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis.

People With Disabilities: The New Diversity Frontier

By Lisa Bertagnoli / Reprinted from CRAIN'S Chicago Business / February 27, 2017



Twenty percent of Americans say they are living with a disability. But at nonprofits, people with disabilities account for maybe 2 percent of board members. Experts say that's a generous guess, and a figure that needs bolstering.

Two local groups, Access Living and ADA25 Advancing Leadership, are trying to make disability part of the diversity conversation. They're also creating pipelines that will help nonprofits and other public-sector organizations identify new board members. "The same people get asked over and over—me and Karen (Tamley, commissioner of the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities," said Marca Bristo. In 1977, Bristo broke her neck, and the accident left her paralyzed. "It was day and night, what I could do before and after," she said. In 1979, she founded Access Living, which helps Chicagoans with disabilities live a full life.

Sixty percent of its board members are people with disabilities, a balance Bristo said she's easily maintained over the past four decades. "These people are significant contributors," she said. "If a nonprofit wants to do it, it's not difficult to do." She herself is on the board of Chicago-based Forefront, Rush University Medical Center and the U.S. International Council on Disabilities, based in Washington.

Bristo said a disability can encompass anything from using a wheelchair to wearing hearing aids. What's tricky are invisible disabilities—mental illnesses such as depression and addiction among them—that many people have but are not likely to share with others. Sometimes simply posing the question—do you have a disability?—can do the trick, said Erick Allen, head of Access Living's new Disability Inclusion Institute, designed to train businesses to recruit and employ people with disabilities. The institute's first formal event is scheduled for March 30.

As the population ages, more people might well identify as living with a disability. "It's the only minority group anyone can join at any time," said Emily Harris, executive director of ADA25 Advancing Leadership. That group, housed at Chicago Community Trust, is an outgrowth of ADA25 Chicago, a 2015 citywide initiative that marked the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. ADA25 Advancing Leadership hosts a fellow class of emerging leaders, inviting people with disabilities who have five to 10 years of leadership experience to participate in a retreat. So far, it has identified 66 such people. Last year, the organization helped appoint 29 of the 66 to nonprofit and public-sector task force boards, Harris said. Allen at Access Living, who has a vision disability, is one of the placements. "It's an untapped talent pool," Harris said of people with disabilities. Any kind of diversity, she said, helps bring a variety of perspective "that helps you serve your population, helps you be more creative and innovative."

Harris, who uses a hearing aid, is on the board of Access Living and on the Leadership Fellows Association for Leadership Greater Chicago. At both organizations, she has advocated for widespread use of microphones during speeches, even when speakers might think they don't need amplification. "I try to educate people that while they might not need it, I do," Harris said.

Earlier this winter Forefront, which represents nonprofits, funders, public agencies and advisers, sponsored a seminar on disability inclusiveness. In addition to Bristo and Tamley, panelists included Rachel Arfa, an Equip for Equality attorney and project manager for Protection & Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security, and Manika Turnbull, vice president and chief diversity officer at Health Care Service Corp., parent company of Blue Cross & Blue Shield Illinois.

Here's their advice to nonprofits for identifying and recruiting new board members who are disabled:

**Create a disability-friendly culture. For instance, on event invitations, include information on how to request accommodations. Ensure gatherings are accessible, which complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and also says welcome to people with disabilities.*

**Encourage people with disabilities to speak up. At the Forefront panel, Turnbull said that Blue Cross & Blue Shield launched an internal marketing campaign last year to create awareness of people with disabilities in the workplace, and encouraged people with disabilities to speak up. In a year, the number of people who identified as having a disability rose to 6 percent from 2 percent.*

**Get connected. Access Living and ADA25 Advancing Leadership are two starting points, as are advisory boards. For instance, the Chicago Transit Authority has an ADA advisory board.*

**Make your website accessible to people with vision disabilities or low vision. "Given what's going on in our city and state, it is imperative that we truly be inclusive, and not just from an optics standpoint," said Eric Weinheimer, CEO of Forefront. Forefront's 24-person board includes only one person with disabilities, and that's Marca Bristo. "We need to be much more thoughtful and deliberate about that," Weinheimer said.*

Remote Monitoring Offering Adults With Disabilities More Independence

by Rita Price, Reprinted from The Columbus Dispatch/TNS | April 24, 2019

Rahimi, 37, is an Iranian immigrant and Ohio State University graduate, a computer scientist and engineer who didn't exactly dream of being a trailblazer in the field of disability services. The seed grew after a chance meeting 16 years ago, when he interviewed social worker Patti Ruble for a college assignment.

Ruble, who is now 76, lost almost all her mobility to polio at age 12. Rahimi was astounded that she had gone on to earn two degrees and establish a career.

Rahimi couldn't stop pondering the frustrations and limitations of Ruble's wheelchair, apartment and unreliable support providers. He could barely contain all the ideas he had to make things easier for her. And — this is the most important part, Rahimi said — he quickly grew to care for Ruble.

Rahimi and his staff in the tiny lab at Medforall mix off-the-shelf hardware such as smartphones and Amazon Alexa with custom designs, programs and even 3-D-printed devices. Incorporating technology typically requires cooperation with paid support providers, and that can raise questions about expectations and billing, risk and liability. Ohio's county disability boards need to become more aware of the technology so that case coordinators can explain options, advocates said, but families shouldn't be made to feel as if they are being pushed to agree to technological support as a means of saving money.

Costs vary widely, depending on the service or device. But a client who switches from in-person support to remote monitoring for even a few hours each week could easily reduce spending by thousands each year. He'd like to see some of the savings go toward boosting wages for support workers, few of whom earn more than \$12 an hour.

The Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities had recommended around-the-clock support a few years ago after a client, John Mogan, suffered a series of injuries. That change raised expenses and, at times, his stress level. A case coordinator told his father that while it was obvious that he couldn't be on his own, "he can still be independent, and this is how we can do it."

Mogan, whose speech is severely affected, said he likes his home and doesn't mind the cameras. He's clearly fond of Rahimi. "Ali comes to John's at all hours of the night," Pat Mogan said. "If they notice something, or if John is restless, he'll be right there." "The home health-care model is not going to be the same," Rahimi said. "Everything is changing. But what technology is not going to be able to take over is love and compassion."



June General Recreation Club Freedom Events Highlighted

5-Jun	Wed	Equestrian Riding at Hopewell	Program Time Varies
8-Jun	Sat	Trenton Thunder Baseball Game	Bus Leaves PFR 5:00 PM
10-Jun	Mon	"Day-Rec Program" -- Robbinsville	Program Time 2 PM-4 PM
11-Jun	Tue	Mall Trip Moorestown Mall 5 Needed	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
12-Jun	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
17-Jun	Mon	"Day-Rec Program" -- Robbinsville	Program Time 2 PM-4 PM
18-Jun	Tue	Shore Trip - Pt Pleasant 5 Needed	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
20-Jun	Thu	Columbus Farmers & Flea Market	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
22-Jun	Sat	Aquatics Hamilton YMCA	Bus Leaves PFR 11:30 AM
24-Jun	Mon	"Day-Rec Program" -- Robbinsville	Program Time 2 PM-4 PM
25-Jun	Tue	Parx Casino - Philadelphia - 5 Needed	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
26-Jun	Wed	Grocery Shopping - Shop Rite	Bus Leaves PFR 9:30 AM
29-Jun	Sat	Trenton Thunder Baseball Game	Bus Leaves PFR 5:00 PM

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Recreation programs



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