

COMMUNITY NOW!

... promoting inclusive communities for all people marginalized because of a disability



MISSION

Community Now! is a statewide nonprofit organization passionately committed to promoting inclusive communities for all Texans often marginalized because of a disability.

WE BELIEVE...

Our loved ones with disabilities should have the option to live in their communities and not languish on long waiting lists for services or forced to live in a dangerous, dehumanizing segregated institution.

The services for our citizens with disabilities must be nothing short of exceptional and that those responsible for providing these services must be held accountable.

Public policy and tax dollars must be aligned to support Texans with disabilities who want to live in smaller, more cost efficient settings in their communities and no longer support the waste and abuse of a failed institutional system.

WANTED

September 1, 2011 is the first day of the budget cycle for the next biennium (2012/13). It will also be the beginning of the end of some long-term care community-based services. The 82nd Legislature thought it best to heavily invest in the State Supported Living Centers (SSLCs) while cutting, and in some cases eliminating, critical services for individuals who have a disability with a desire to live in the community. If these decisions have an impact in your life, we would like to hear from YOU!

Each story puts a face with the issue; an issue that will require us to work together for change. We also encourage you to tell your representative about the impact their decision have in your life. If you are still waiting on an "interest" list for services, they need to hear from you too. Don't know who your representative is visit: <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/>. Need help putting your story together, call Joe Tate at 1-830-305-0613. Email him at: tate392@gmail.com.

We can not take a break just because the session is over. There is still work to be done. We must ORGANIZE! Together we are stronger.

"A **PERFECTION** of means, and *confusion* of aims, seems to be our main problem."

– Albert Einstein

Independence from waiting. Freedom from institutions.

Community Now! *Updates and Activities*

The Community Now! board of directors met the first weekend in August to plan strategies to employ now and during the next Legislative session. A common theme throughout the day was the need to ORGANIZE and STRENGTHEN grassroots advocacy efforts across Texas to bring our unified voices to those who make decisions about our lives.

Community Now! has 4 active coalitions. (Below) Don't see one in your area – contact us, we can help you get one started. If you are a leader or member of a support group or organization in your community, contact us. We would welcome an invitation to speak with your members.

To ORGANIZE and STRENGTHEN grassroots efforts will require the work of many. If you would like to help, please contact us. Your commitment to volunteer does not need to be grandiose or time consuming. Sometimes the smallest efforts can help out the most.



Community Now! is on Facebook – “Like” us to get updates and join the conversation with others interested in long-term care reform in Texas. <https://www.facebook.com/communitynowfreedom>

Austin Coalition

The Austin Coalition gets together at 6:00 PM the 1st Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at the ADAPT offices | 1640A East Second Street | Austin, Texas.

- Joe Tate Email tate392@gmail.com
- Sarah Watkins Email watkins.sarah.e@gmail.com
- David Wittie Email davidwittie@yahoo.com

Bryan College Station

- Jeff Garrison-Tate Email communitynowfreedom@gmail.com

Corpus Christi

- Barbara Sanders Email bgsanders3@gmail.com

D/FW Area Coalition

- Jeanne Cecil Email jeannemcecil@prodigy.net
- Michelle Dooley Email mich12656@yahoo.com
- Cindi Paschall Email cindipaschall@sbcglobal.net

SAVE THE DATE!

FREEDOM FEST 2011

September 30, 2011
5:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Fiesta Gardens | Austin

Join us for an evening of music, fun, a silent auction and more.

Watch for updates on the website and Facebook. These will be posted as plans are finalized.

There may be times when we are *powerless* to prevent injustice, but there must *never* be a time when we fail to **PROTEST.**"

Elie Wiesel

Self-Advocacy, *A Civil Rights Movement*

“You have *your* way. I have *my* way. As for the *right* way, the *correct* way, and the *only* way, it **DOES NOT** exist.”

– Friedrich Nietzsche

What is Self-Advocacy?

The term “self-advocacy” has been around a long time now. It can be traced back to the 1960’s when adults living with a disability label began speaking out about the importance of taking an active role in planning their lives and the programs that supported them.

A concept, once used more with adults, has been recognized as a skill that should be encouraged in children and teens.

For many individuals who have a disability the opportunity to speak up for oneself is believed impossible. A decision made based on a physical, cognitive or communication challenge and/or the belief that a person does not have the capacity to make the right decision. This could not be further from the truth. Everyone has the ability to express their wants, needs, likes and dislikes. Each person is unique – he or she may speak up with spoken words, sign language, letter boards, behavior, facial expressions or in ways unique to them. Remember all behavior is communication and the simplest movement a person makes may be the only way they have to express themselves. This requires the communication partner to listen with all senses to hear what the person is saying.

To learn more about self-advocacy and the self-advocacy movement, check out the links below.

History

- Parallels In Time – The History of Developmental Disabilities
<http://www.mncdd.org/parallels/index.html>

Informational Articles

- *Thoughts about Self-advocacy* by Michael Kennedy & Bonnie Shoultz
<http://thechp.syr.edu/thoughts.htm>
- *More Thoughts on Self-Advocacy: The Movement, The Group & The Individual* by Bonnie Shoultz
<http://thechp.syr.edu/moretho.htm>

Organizations

- *Kids As Self-Advocates (KASA)* - a national, grassroots project created by youth with disabilities for youth.
<http://www.fvkasa.org/index.php>
- *National Youth Leadership Network (NYLN)* - NYLN is a youth-led organization supporting young people in their role as the next generation of leadership in the Disability Rights Movement <http://www.nyln.org/>
- *Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)* - the self-advocacy organization that has been working for the full inclusion of individuals with I/DD in the community <http://www.sabeusa.org/>
- *Self-Advocacy USA!* – A group for self-advocates, advisors and supporters of the self-advocacy movement to share information about local, state and national self-advocacy issues. Visit them on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Self-Advocacy-USA/162568073791195>
- **The Riot! Newsletter** – written *by* and *for* individuals who have a disability <http://www.theriotrocks.org/>



There is only *one* **SUCCESS** – to live your life your *own* way. – C. Morley

Around the State, *News You Can Use*

INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

2011 State Accessibility Awards Program Nominations

The Program recognizes businesses, property owners and / or organizations that go above and beyond the minimum legal accessibility requirements, and which have considered service accessibility as well as physical accessibility. *Deadline for submissions – September 30, 2011.* For more information: http://www.trasatexas.com/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=903704&module_id=100090

Access Board to Hold Public Meeting

The Access Board, an independent Federal agency devoted to accessibility for people with disabilities, invites the public to an open forum in Dallas on September 12. Focus: a variety of accessibility topics. <http://www.access-board.gov/news/dallas.htm>

Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD) – Pen 2 Paper Creative Writing Contest

CTD's pen 2 paper creative writing contest is back! Whether or not you have experience as a creative writer; whether or not you have a disability- we want to hear your voice: your stories, your perspectives, your fears, and your discoveries about disability! *Entry deadline - September 12, 2011.* <http://www.cotwd.org/pen2paper.html>

Disability Rights Texas seeking Board Member Applicants

Disability Rights Texas, the designated protection and advocacy agency for Texans with disabilities, welcomes all nominations for its Board of Directors and Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Mental Illness (PAIMI) Advisory Council. *Application deadline – August 31, 2011.* <http://www.disabilityrightstx.org/contact/volunteer-opportunities/>

HHSC Accepting Applications for Consumer Direction Workgroup

The workgroup assists health and human services agencies in developing, implementing, and administering the Consumer Directed Services and Service Responsibility Option programs for managing long-term services and supports. *Application Deadline – August 30, 2011.* http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/about_hhsc/AdvisoryCommittees/cdw/index.shtml.

IDEA Continuous Improvement Visit Parent Survey

Share your expertise and knowledge! The US Department of Special Education Programs wants to hear from you. Complete the brief survey to share your experiences. *Your opinion is valuable* and will help OSEP evaluate the impact of IDEA. <http://www.partnerstx.org/>

Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) Web Site Survey

DARS needs your feedback to improve their website. <http://www.dars.state.tx.us/announcements/20110809.shtml>

National Rally in Washington DC - Demand Responsible Medicaid Reform

Are you fed up with threats to Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security – while no one looks at the real problems in the system? Are you feeling isolated and threatened, wondering what tomorrow may bring? You are not alone. Join ADAPT and other disability, aging and civil rights groups September 21, 2011 in Washington DC as we demand responsible Medicaid reform that supports our civil right to live in the most integrated setting. For more information: http://www.adapt.org/main/medicaid_rally

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

12th Chronic Illness and Disability Conference: Transition from Pediatric to Adult-based Care

Baylor College of Medicine & Texas Children's Hospital

October 21-22, 2011 | Houston, Texas
<http://www.baylorcme.org/search/detail.cfm?cme=832>

20th Annual Texas Autism Conference

Texas Education Agency and ESC - Region 2

October 13-15, 2011 | Houston, Texas
<http://autism.esc2.net/conference/index.asp>

A Land We Can Share,

Access to the Literate Community for ALL!

Learning Together Workshop Series

Speaker: Dr. Paula Kluth

September 9, 2011 | Ft. Worth, Texas
http://www.arcnetc.org/uploads/Paula_Kluth_-_2011.pdf

Abilities EXPO!

August 26 – 28, 2011 | Houston, Texas
Friday 11 - 5 | Saturday 10 – 5 | Sunday 11 - 4
<http://www.abilitiesexpo.com/houston/>

Dallas Autism & Asperger's Syndrome Super Conference

Future Horizons & Sensory World

October 6-7, 2011 | Dallas, Texas
<http://www.fhautism.com/Conferences/tabid/91/Default.aspx>

DBMAT: Making A Sweet Life 39th Annual Family Conference

Deaf-Blind Multiple Handicapped Assoc. of TX

October 14 – 16, 2011 | Camp John Marc
<http://www.dbmat-tx.org/newsletters/newsletter.html>

Disability Leadership Network

Family 2 Family Network

4 Monthly Trainings in Sugar Land, Texas

Thursdays - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

September 15, October 20, November 17 and December 8, 2011

4 Monthly Trainings in Clear Lake, Texas

Fridays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

September 16, October 21, November 18 and December 9, 2011

<http://www.familyofamilynetwork.org/programs/disability-leadership-program>

"Journey through the Autism Spectrum"

Speakers: Paula Kluth & Temple Grandin

September 15 – 16, 2011 | Houston, Texas
<http://www.spectrumtrainingsystemsinc.com/houston.html>

Northeast Texas Special Needs Conference

Key Note Speaker: Kathie Snow

September 24, 2011 | 8:30 – 4:30 | Paris, Texas
<http://www.rvdss.org/conference>

Tools for the Future! A Workshop for Adults with Williams Syndrome

William Syndrome Association – WSA

September 22 – 25, 2011 | San Antonio, TX
<http://www.williams-syndrome.org/wsa-dream-team-and-gang-workshops>

Wrightslaw Special Education and Advocacy Law Conference with Pete Wright, Esq.

October 20, 2011 | 9:00 – 4:30 | Plano

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/speak/11.10.tx.htm>

FREE HASEEB FUND GRANTS

The Free Haseeb Fund, a program of Community Now! offers small grants (\$250.00) to individuals Who have recently left a state operated institution to live in their community.

For more information or to obtain an application, contact Joe Tate at 1-830-305-0613 or through Email: tate392@gmail.com.

SIBLING SUPPORTS

SIB scape

... Improving the lives of individuals who have a developmental disability by supporting and empowering siblings and others through support, education, and advocacy.

<http://www.sibscape.org/>

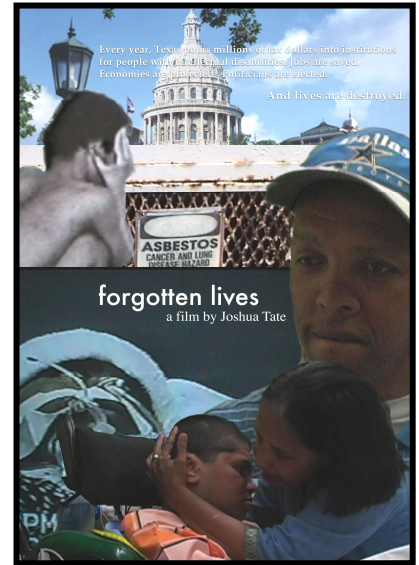
Sibling Support Project

The Sibling Support Project is a national effort dedicated to the life-long concerns of brothers and sisters of individuals who have special health, developmental, or mental health concerns.

<http://www.siblingsupport.org/>



Community Now!
2316 Bristol
Bryan, Texas 77802
www.communitynowfreedom.org



Forgotten Lives, A film by Joshua Tate

Forgotten Lives is a 44 minute award winning film that chronicles the horror and abuse perpetrated against Texas' most vulnerable citizens inside state institutions and offers hope for a future of freedom and dignity in the community.

A Comparison of You & I

As a person without a disability label you are presumed competent

As a person who has a disability label I am presumed incompetent

As a person without a disability label you are seen as
a partner in a reciprocal relationship when you ask for help

As a person with a disability I am seen as
incapable or needy because I ask for help

As a person without a disability label you are seen as
an individual capable of learning from your mistakes

As a person with a disability label I am seen
as incapacitated and assigned a guardian

As a person without a disability label you are seen as
a contributing member of society

As a person with a disability label I am seen
as a drain on society

As a person without a disability label you are seen as human

As a person with a disability label I am seen as...