



# DAWN AWAKENINGS

## Awaken to Independence

May 2010

### **NEW REPORT EMPHASIZES COST-EFFECTIVE OLNSTEAD PRINCIPLES NECESSARY FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM AND CIVIL RIGHTS.**

The Bazelon Center for Mental Health has released a report asserting that implementing the Olmstead decision would have a dramatic effect on health care reform and the economy.

“Still Waiting...The Unfulfilled Promise of Olmstead” details the current situation ten years after the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Olmstead v. LC and EW*. Under that decision, the court said states have an obligation to provide people with developmental disabilities and mental illness in community settings where medically possible to save billions of dollars and improve healthcare outcomes.

In a call to action, Robert Bazelon, Executive Director of the Bazelon Center, described steps that Congress, federal agencies and the states should take to create community based care models. He also described how Olmstead programs could guide healthcare reform and save billions of taxpayer dollars. Among the main points of the report:

States must determine how many people with disabilities are served in unnecessarily segregated setting and what community - based services are necessary to support reintegration and recovery, and then shift funding from institutions to community based settings.

States continue to waste valuable resources by placing people with mental illnesses in costly, ineffective institutional settings. The cost of a supportive apartment is one-eighth that of state hospital care, just over a third of the cost of a board and care facility.

Implementing Olmstead programs through health care reform would save taxpayers billions of dollars by making essential community services available to people with mental illnesses.

In 1999, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Olmstead* that under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), public services for people with disabilities must be provided in the most integrated setting possible, giving them the opportunity to live independently in the community rather than in segregated institutional settings.

To view a copy of the report, visit: <http://www.bazelon.org>.

### **OBAMA BUDGET ALTERS FUNDING STREAMS**

President Barack Obama recently announced the federal budget for FY 2011, which includes spending adjustments for people with disabilities.

The fiscal year which begins in October, 2011 totals \$ 3.8 trillion. It includes increases for special education, vocational training and independent living programs. The budget also calls for the consolidation several funding streams.

The budget proposes to alter the way that independent living centers are funded and establishes a “Grants for Independent Living” that would pool funding for Centers of Independent Living and Statewide Independent Living Councils.

Under the plan, the combined federal funding stream would increase by \$ 6.3 million in 2011 and go to each state’s Designated State Unit, rather than the programs as it does now. The budget calls for the consolidation of the Migrant and Seasonal Workers program and Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants Program joining two employment services for people with disabilities into a group of programs that will see a \$57 million increase in funding.

The President’s budget including a \$ 39 million request to the U.S. Department of Labor for increasing the workforce participation of people with disabilities. The money would go to the Office of Disability Employment Policy to establish new partnerships to overcome obstacles to employment. The Health Resources and Services Administration will receive a \$7 million increase in funding for autism research.

The implications for this in New Jersey are far reaching. The total amount of money going to the state for disability services will be increased at the federal level.

#### **FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S DESK—CARMELA SLIVINSKI**

I hope this finds you all well and looking forward to summer. We are looking forward to spending some time with you all at our upcoming picnic on June 5<sup>th</sup>. It will give us a chance to catch up with you and enjoy a leisurely afternoon chatting and enjoying some good food.

It goes without saying that these are very difficult times for everyone. As I am sure you are aware, budget cuts are on the minds of everyone and DAWN is no different. We are struggling to continue to provide support to all the individuals that come to us for assistance. Programs and services for people with disabilities are feeling the brunt of the budget crisis in all areas. I am sure many of you are already aware of the cuts that have impacted our social and recreational programs. We are doing our best to maintain some level of social activities and are hopeful that the climate will change in the near future. Unfortunately, while social activities are an important component of maintaining independence and a sense of well being, they are typically the first services that get cut and as we see the drastic cuts being made to transportation, education, housing and most other vital services, we can’t help but focus our efforts on advocating against reductions in cuts to essential services.

Marc and I recently attended the NJ Transit Public Forum held in Morris County on March 26<sup>th</sup>. The turnout was impressive and the public comments shared were heartfelt and moving. It is no surprise that NJ Transit went back to the drawing board and reworked their proposed budget. I applaud all that were a part of this incredible advocacy effort. As you will see in this newsletter, there are public forums for Para-transit being held in all three counties DAWN serves. I hope you will take a few minutes to share your thoughts with us so we can write a plan that meets the needs of the people we serve. If you have any questions or need the materials in alternate format, please call the office and we will assist you.

In our last issue, I shared with you the work DAWN has been doing to expand our case management services so we can assist more individuals in a comprehensive manner. We know that many individuals need real help to solve their issues and by expanding our case management services, we can work one-on-one with many individuals to help them access the supports they need. One of the new services we are offering is serving as a host site for individuals to apply for NJ Shares. This program provides financial assistance to those individuals and families that are not eligible for Low Income energy assistance but are still struggling with utility bills. If you are having difficulty with your utility bills and think you may be eligible, call the office at 1-888-383-3296 and one of the staff will be able to help determine if you are eligible.

Lastly, I want to share with you some updates on the memorial fund which was created to honor the memory of my daughter Francesca. We put together a committee of members who are helping to identify how to best utilize the funds that have been collected since Francesca passed away. The committee has changed the name of the fund and created a mission statement taking into consideration the things that were important to Francesca during her short life.

*“The mission of Franki’s Fund is to offer young adults with special needs ages 14 to 25 an opportunity to explore artistic and vocational pursuits that would enrich their lives and expand their horizons.”*

We recently hosted our first activities which included jewelry making and drawing. We chose these two activities because they were Francesca’s favorite things to do. The activities were a huge success and we are working on planning for the next sessions. Each of the sessions build on a skill that the participants can carry over into their day-to-day life and hopefully help them identify skills that they like and are good at.

The fundraising committee is also busy planning the 2nd annual “Franki’s Fund” fundraiser which is scheduled to be held on Sunday, November 7, 2010. The Event will be held at Zeris Inn from 12:30 - 4:30. More details will follow. If anyone is interested in helping the planning committee with prize solicitation, please let Marc Moldé know. I hope you will join us.

Please remember to visit our website [www.dawncil.org](http://www.dawncil.org) for upcoming programs and activities and I encourage you all to consider signing on to the chat room. It is a good way to keep in touch with others and in light of the cuts to our recreation program a good way to socialize with people that you would normally see out at our events.

Be well,  
Carmela

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:**

An emergency can happen at any time, and it is essential to be prepared. What follows are some tips about emergency preparedness for people with disabilities:

### **General Tips:**

- National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration weather radio can be set to alert you to natural or man made disasters by audible alarm, visible strobe alarm, or vibration alerts. For more information, see [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)
- Anticipate reactions you may have after a disaster and plan strategies for coping with them, such as having enough supplies to keep you going for a few days. Plan to be on your own at least three days after a Disaster. Telephones, power and transportation services may be disrupted.
- Review, drill and update plans and equipment at least every 6 months. Include any service animals in drills.
- If you use walking aids, always keep them near you.
- Practice telling first responders about the best way to assist you.

### **Ready Kit:**

- It’s a good idea to keep a bag containing the supplies you would need in an emergency, just in case you need to leave in a hurry. Be sure to label all items and keep the kit handy. These are suggested supplies to include:
- Battery - operated flashlight, radio, TV.
- All medications and cooler (if necessary); list of prescriptions.

- One week supply of non-perishable food that meets your dietary needs ; manual can opener.
- One gallon of water per person per day; or more if needed (ask your doctor)
- Cash, credit cards, checkbook, ATM card.
- Any necessary portable medical equipment and assistive devices. (e.g.: oxygen, hearing aids)
- If applicable, items for infants, e.g. formula, diapers.
- Important documents (photo ID, birth certificates, proof of address, medical insurance, etc.)

Supplies for any service animals, including food, ID tags, etc.

For more information on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities go to [www.dawncil.com](http://www.dawncil.com).

## **DAWN CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING OFFERS HOME MODIFICATION PROGRAM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SPINAL CORD INJURIES LIVING IN MORRIS, SUSSEX AND WARREN COUNTIES**

DAWN Center for Independent Living is pleased to announce the availability of funds made possible through a grant from the Craig T. Neilsen Foundation. The grant will provide home modifications to people with spinal cord injuries living in Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties. Priority will be given to persons at risk of institutionalization, if modifications are not made to their home. Medical and financial need must be demonstrated. Types of modifications may include but are not limited to ramps, widening of doorways, raising countertops, grab bars, floor-level showers and stair glides. Applicants must provide two cost estimates of the work to be done as well as before and after photos. The amount available per recipient will average \$ 2,000 - \$ 4,000 on a first come, first served basis.

Established in 2002, the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation is a private foundation dedicated to supporting cutting - edge research to find a cure for paralysis due to spinal cord injury (SCI) and innovative rehabilitation programs to improve the quality of life for those living with SCI. Mr. Neilsen himself a quadriplegic for 21 years until his death in 2006, recruited experts in the SCI community to peer review all grant requests for scientific and clinical research, post - doctoral fellowships, and quality of life program grants.

If you or someone else you know is interested in the Home Modification Program or other DAWN services, please contact Mr. Marc Molde at 973-625-1940 or TTD 973-625-1932

## **STATE BUDGET CRISIS CUTS INTO DISABILITY SERVICES**

Governor Christie's plan to close the budget gap, announced in late February, will affect the disabled community in New Jersey in several ways:

Overall, roughly \$ 72 million in cuts will be to the Department of Human Services (DHS). These cuts took effect immediately after the announcement.

- \$2 million in waiting list funding. The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) which was allocated \$ 4million during fiscal year 2010.
- \$4.4 million in cuts to Olmstead funding.
- \$136,000 in cuts to information technology services/contracts.
- \$106,000 reduction in "duplicative contracts" between DDD and the Department of Health and Senior Services.
- \$5 million to be saved through developmental center efficiencies.
- \$5,000,000 to be saved by halting further equipment purchases across divisions.

- \$2,000, 000 to be saved by halting the distribution of funds to regional DDD offices to handle emergencies.
- \$54,000 in cuts to uncommitted capital expenses.
- \$234,000 in cuts to specific agencies.

Details on all the fiscal year 2010 budget cuts can be found at <http://nj.gov/governor> and enter search for budget solutions. It is important that you write to your local representatives about these cuts and to speak out against these cuts. Go to [www.state.nj.us/](http://www.state.nj.us/) to find out the name of your local representative so you can write to him/her.

## **CHUBBY CHECKER AND SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSIONER ASTRUE ANNOUNCE A NEW “TWIST” IN THE LAW; CHANGES MAKE IT EASIER TO QUALIFY FOR EXTRA HELP WITH MEDICAID PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN COSTS**

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security and Chubby Checker, Grammy Award Winner and rock and roll legend, have launched a new campaign to inform millions of Americans about a new ‘twist’ in the law that makes it easier to qualify for extra help with Medicare prescription drug costs. The extra help program currently provides assistance to more than nine million senior and disabled Americans – saving them an average of \$ 4,000 a year on their Medicare prescription drug plan costs. To apply for extra help, there is an easy-to-use online application available at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)

“The changes in the Medicare law that take effect this month will allow hundreds of thousands of Americans who are struggling to pay their prescription drug costs to get extra help during these tough times” said Commissioner Astrue. “I am thrilled that Chubby Checker has volunteered to help us spread this important message through a new television, radio, and Internet spot as well as pamphlets and posters.”

“Listen up, America! For 50 years, people of all ages and backgrounds have danced the Twist” Chubby Checker said. “Now it’s important everyone learn this new twist in the law. Check it out at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).”

To qualify for extra help, people must meet certain resource and income limits. The new Medicare law eases those requirements in two ways. First, it eliminates the cash value of life insurance from counting as a resource. Second, it eliminates the assistance people receive from others to pay for household expenses, such as food, rent, mortgage or utilities, from counting as income. There is also another new “twist” in the law. The application for extra help can now start the application process for Medicare Savings Programs, state programs which provide help with other Medicare costs. These programs help pay Medicare Part B (medical insurance) premiums. For some people, The Medicare Savings Programs also pay Medicare Part A (hospital insurance) premiums, if any, and Part A and B deductibles and co-payments. To learn more about the extra help program and to view the new TV spot featuring Chubby Checker, go to [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) and enter extra help into the search box .

## **WEB SITES, ETC.**

**American Association of People with Disabilities** – Has various information on issues important to people with disabilities. – [www.aapd.com](http://www.aapd.com)

**Disability Rights Advocates** – Non – profit legal center whose mission is to advance equal rights and opportunities for people with all types of disabilities nationwide and internationally – [www.dralegal.org/](http://www.dralegal.org/)

**National Association for the Visually Handicapped** – Information on the rights of people with visual impairments – [www.navh.org/](http://www.navh.org/)

**Shared Work** – A community of people with disabilities emphasizing educational concerns as well as other issues affecting people with disabilities – [www.ideainfo.org](http://www.ideainfo.org)

## **WORDWIDE EMERGENCY NUMBER**

The emergency number worldwide for cell phones is 112. If you find yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network; and there is an emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to establish the emergency number for you, and interestingly this number 112 can be dialed even if the keypad is locked. Try it out!

## **CRUISES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES:**

Group and individual vacation options for Adults and Families dealing with Autism and Related Disabilities:

“Autism on the Seas” is dedicated to servicing the cruising travel needs of families and individuals faced with Autism and Asperger Syndrome and all Cognitive, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities as well as Cerebral Palsy and Down Syndrome.

“Autism on the Seas” does this in collaboration with Royal Caribbean (since 2007) Celebrity, Norwegian Cruise Lines or Disney Cruises on any date.

## **NEW YORK METRO ABILITIES EXPO.**

The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual New York Metro Abilities Exposition will be held at the New Jersey Convention Center at 97 Sunfield Ave.in Edison, N.J. :

Friday, May 21 - 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 22 - 10:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

Sunday ,May 23 -11:00 am. - 4:00 pm.

Many of the exhibitors present will feature the latest in adaptive technology, adaptive equipment and services available to people with disabilities in the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan Area. Free workshops will also be available as well as first class events and activities.

There will be a total of 121 exhibitors including: the New Jersey Division of Disability Services; Brain Injury Association of New Jersey (B.I.A.N.J.); Garden State Scooters; Adapt Solutions; and Freedom Motors, U.S.A.

Registration is free for all people attending. In order to register for this event or get more information go to their website at [www.abilitiesexpo.com](http://www.abilitiesexpo.com) .

## **LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY: CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE:**

Legal Services of Northwest New Jersey (LSNWJ) provides free civil legal services to assist residents of Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties in accessing the system of justice and maintaining essential basic needs.

LSNWJ has special projects to help:

- Seniors, age 60 and older.
- Students with education law issues.
- People affected by AIDS/HIV.
- People with physical and mental disabilities.
- People with employment issues.
- People with health care access issues.
- Parents facing DYFS intervention.
- People facing foreclosure and predatory lending practices.
- Financial eligibility guidelines are set by the funding sources of LSNWJ. LSNWJ also considers an applicant's assets in determining eligibility.

LSNWJ is funded by the federal, state and county governments, the United Way, the IOLTA Fund and the Campaign for Justice. LSNWJ does not discriminate in the provision of any of its services.

To find out more about LSNWJ contact the following:

Morris Division – (973) 285 – 6911  
Sussex Division - (973) 383 – 7400  
Warren Division – (908) 475 – 2010

Or go to their website at [www.lsnwj.org](http://www.lsnwj.org)

## **NEW JERSEY SPECIAL NEEDS REGISTRY:**

Do you need assistance when a disaster strikes? Well, there is a place you can go. The New Jersey Special Needs Registry allow residents with special needs and their families, friends and associates an opportunity to provide information to emergency response agencies, so emergency responders can better plan to serve them in a disaster or other emergency.

The information collected by the registry will be made confidential and will not be available to the public. The information will be held securely and only used for emergency response and planning.

All citizens with disabilities should register so they can be notified by local officials when an evacuation has been ordered. It may also help save your life!

To register go to the registry's website at [www13.state.nj.us/SpecialNeeds](http://www13.state.nj.us/SpecialNeeds) or call 211 for assistance.

## **PERSONAL ATTENDANT SERVICES PROGRAM:**

The Personal Attendant Services Program (P.A.S.P.) is a supplemental, self-directed program that provides routine, non-medical assistance to adults ages 18 - 65 years. Those who qualify for the program must have a permanent physical disability, and are either employed, involved with community volunteer work or attending school. Personal Attendants assist in chores such as light housekeeping, bathing, dressing, meal preparation, shopping, driving or using public transportation. The number of hours a person receives depends on individual needs up to 40 hours per week.

To find out more about P.A.S.P. call your county coordinator:

Morris County – (973) 285 - 6865  
Sussex County – (973) 704 - 6350  
Warren County – (973) 625 – 1940

## **UPCOMING DAWN SOCIAL EVENTS:**

The following is a list of scheduled events being held for our DAWN General Membership over the next three months. An annual registration fee of \$ 50.00 is due prior to attending the first event. If you haven't paid this fee please do so. Any request for an accommodation must be made at least two weeks before an event. Without proper notification the accommodation may not be possible.

**May 20<sup>th</sup>** – 6:30 – 8:30 pm – Dinner Out Olive Garden Restaurant, Rockaway, N.J.  
Cost of Meal.

**June 5<sup>th</sup>** – 12 – 4:00 P.M. – Annual Summer Picnic Hedden Park – Randolph, N.J. Cost to be determined.

**Remember game night is held every 4th Thursday of the month from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm.**

For more information please call Marc Molde at (973) 625 – 1940.

## **AUDIT A COLLEGE COURSE FOR FREE:**

Audit a college course without leaving your couch? At [AcademicEarth.org](http://AcademicEarth.org), you can stream actual course lectures from some of the nations top universities. There's no homework, no exams, no 8 a.m. labs – just you, your curiosity, and your computer. Watch and learn.

## **TO DISABLE A STOLEN MOBILE PHONE**

Check your mobile phone's serial number, key in the following digits on your mobile phone: \*#06#. A 15 digit code will appear on the screen. This number is unique to your handset. Write it down and keep it somewhere safe. If your phone is stolen, you can phone your service provider and give them this code. They will be able to block your handset and any thief who has the phone will not be able to use it.