



# DAWN, Inc. Newsletter

Spring 2003

DAWN, Inc.  
Issued: March 2003

Dawn is a non-residential center for independent living (CIL) committed to providing the resources to enable people with disabilities to remain independent. Dawn is federally mandated to provide free of charge the following core services:

- Information & Referral
- Advocacy
- Peer support
- Independent Living Skills
- Recreational activities are also provided at a cost

CILs are membership organizations located throughout the country and each provides services to a specific geographic area. Dawn services Morris, Sussex and Warren counties.

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## **Claim Your Federal and State Earned Income Tax Credit**

The Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) can help you if you worked full or part-time in 2002 and: You were raising one child in your home and your family earned less than \$29,201, you can receive up to \$2,506; or new this year:

If you're married, filing jointly, your income must be less than \$30,201. You were raising two or more children in your home and your family earned less than \$33,178, you can receive up to \$4,140; or New this year: If you are married, filing jointly, your income must be less than \$34,178.

You are between the ages of 25-65, not raising children, and earned less than \$11,060, you can receive up to \$376.

New this year: If you are married, filing jointly, your income must be less than \$12,060.

For more information on EITC or VITA call 1-800-829-1040 or visit: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

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The New Jersey Earned Income Tax Credit (NJ EITC) can help you if you worked full or part-time in 2002 and: You were raising one child in your home and your family earned less than \$20,000, you can receive up to \$439; or

You were raising two or more children in your home and your family earned less than \$20,000, you can get up to \$725.

For more information call 1-888-895-9179 or visit: [www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/](http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/)

### **Mentor a Parent with a Disability**

Through the Looking Glass (TLG) invites parents with disabilities to mentor other parents who are seeking peer support. If you or anyone you know is interested in participating in the National Parent-to-Parent Network (of the National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities at TLG), please contact Nikki Brown-Booker at TLG. (510) 848-1112 (800) 644-2666 (voice) (800) 804-1616 (TTY)  
e-mail: [TLG@lookingglass.org](mailto:TLG@lookingglass.org)

### **From the Executive Director's Desk**

Welcome to the new format for our member's newsletter. We have made some changes to create a more functional and informative newsletter for you. We will continue to provide you with information on resources available as well as new websites to access information on disability issues.

Also, we will begin an advocacy corner, where legislative activities you can get involved in will be highlighted.. We are creating an advocacy committee; anyone interested in being involved can contact Laura Curtis.

In addition, we would like to implement a member's corner where members can submit articles for the newsletter. If anyone is interested in submitting articles, you can forward them to the office via, mail, email or fax. They will be reviewed and a decision will be made as to whether it can be used or not.

The newsletters will now be sent to you on a quarterly basis rather than every month. As of October, 2003 we will no longer be sending the newsletter to members who haven't paid their yearly dues. Membership dues are only \$15 per individual member and help cover the cost of creating and printing the newsletter. It is a small price to pay for all the valuable information provided. In addition, many of you still have not paid your membership dues for this year. It's not too late to send it in. Remember, all dues received go directly towards the programs and services we provide to you and is considered a donation for your tax filing. By now you should have received the tentative schedule of activities for the year, we will continue to send the recreational activities list out at least every month. We hope that by providing you with an advanced schedule, you will be able to plan accordingly so you could participate in those events which are more costly than others, as well as be able to sign up for each activity and make necessary requests for accommodations in advance. Also, you have noticed that we have started a new program called Dinner on DAWN. If your activity schedule has the sticker showing you are the winner, call the office and the next dinner you attend with DAWN will be paid for compliments of DAWN.

Some important points you need to remember when attending DAWN activities:

As always, in order to ensure we can meet your needs, we must be informed of the need for an

accommodation at least two (2) weeks prior to each event. This request must come from the individual in need of the accommodation. Please do not assume that the office staff is aware of your needs and will plan accordingly. We are a Center for Independent Living and promote that philosophy. That means that only you know what you need and you must relay those needs to us accordingly.

If you have signed up with DAWN for transportation to an event, it is then your responsibility to call the appropriate transit company within your county to get your pick-up time. You should call your county transit two (2) days in advance of the event. Particularly in Morris County, MAPS will no longer put you on the schedule for pick-up if they do not hear directly from you two (2) days prior to the event. If MAPS does not hear from you, it will be assumed you are not attending and your name will be removed from the list for pick-up. In recent months we have had several problems with individuals signing up for activities and telling transit they decided not to go when they were called to confirm. This has created many problems especially for MAPS and we are concerned they may discontinue service for us. We understand emergencies happen, but these have been regular occurrences. Be responsible! If you have a legitimate reason for canceling, go ahead and do so, but if not and you have committed to attending, please do so. These problems affect not only you but all members.

Enjoy the new format, give us your opinion and be sure to visit our updated website, [www.dawncil.org](http://www.dawncil.org)

### **On-line Information**

<http://www.commodio.com> For freedom of Interaction, Commodo developed an innovative method of human-computer interaction - direct pointing by means of voice or keyboard, which is implemented in the Qpointer line of products.

<http://www.opm.gov/disability> Disability web-site offers information on federal job opportunities, accommodation issues, benefits and telecommuting. The web-site also contains an e-learning training module for managers on reasonable accommodation, as well as information on laws and executive orders on disability employment.

#### *Good Resources for Travel / Travel Tips*

- [access-able.com](http://access-able.com)
- [mossresourcenet.org/travel.htm](http://mossresourcenet.org/travel.htm)
- [projectaction.org/paweb/index.htm](http://projectaction.org/paweb/index.htm)
- [spinalcord.org/resource/Factsheets/factsheet15.html](http://spinalcord.org/resource/Factsheets/factsheet15.html) The National Spinal Cord Injury Association's site is excellent. There were numerous links for travel alone.

### **ALDA-GS (Association of Late-Deafened Adults-Garden State)**

The Association of Late-Deafened Adults-Garden State (ALDA-GS) is pleased to announce the availability of a \$1,500 scholarship to a deserving deaf or hard of hearing student who plans to attend college or vocational school in 2003.

This offer is open to any deaf or hard of hearing student whose home address is in New Jersey, and to any

deaf or hard of hearing adult residing in New Jersey who has a high school diploma and who wishes to obtain some form of further education to better his or her circumstances.

Enclosed is a blank application. Please feel free to contact Diana Fanuel if you have any questions or if she can assist you.

Diana Fanuel  
Chair Scholarship Committee  
ALDA-GS  
3-11 Lyons Avenue  
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410-6164  
E-mail: [aldafan@ivillage.com](mailto:aldafan@ivillage.com)

Copy of application also available from the DAWN office.

### **"Ticket to Work Program"**

The Ticket to Work Program provides that eligible Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries with disabilities will receive a "Ticket" that they can use to obtain employment services, vocational rehabilitation services or other support services from an approved provider of their choice. The law also expands Medicaid and Medicare coverage to more people with disabilities who work. It also extends Medicare Part A (Hospital) premium-free coverage for four and one-half years beyond the current limit for disability beneficiaries who work.

Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) Program can help if you are a SSA beneficiary, family member, individual with a disability, employer, attorney, government agency, service provider, community organization, or advocacy group and:

- You need education and training about employment, work incentives, and other work related issues, including available civil rights protections under the law
- You need information or referral related to the services and assistance that may be available to SSA beneficiaries in return to work efforts, including methods to apply for and access those services.
- SSA beneficiaries should also contact PABSS if they need help with:
- Need help investigating or filing a complaint of improper or inadequate service assistance against a vocational provider, work incentive planner, employer.
- Need the resolution of complaints through mediation, negotiation, etc.
- Need legal counsel and litigation services to protect your rights as a SSA beneficiary under the law.

## **2-1-1 Call Centers – Helpline**

The implementation of New Jersey's Helpline has begun. Centers serving four counties, Hunterdon, Camden, Morris, and Passaic, will be operational by January 2003. (Morris is active.)

Use the 211 Helpline for the following:

- Financial assistance
- Emergency food / shelter
- Housing programs
- Health care resources
- Child care programs
- Volunteer opportunities
- Services for older adults
- Substance abuse issues
- Transportation
- Mental health services
- Abuse victim services
- Legal services

2-1-1 is a program of First Call for Help ([www.firstcall.org](http://www.firstcall.org)) If 2-1-1 doesn't work from your phone, dial 1-800-435-7555. (There is a slight delay before you hear ringing at the other end.)

## **Automatic Door Operator**

An automatic door operator (Private-Door) is designed for the physically challenged community. The cost is \$799 and includes a two-year warranty. Allows easy entrance to your home: The entrance to your home should not be a barrier to your freedom, and neither should the cost to automate it. Unlike many other operators, Private-door does not require drastic modification to the existing door. It is powered by a simple 12-volt transformer that plugs into any outlet. The system will not interfere with normal manual operation of the door, making it easy for family and guests to enter. It is landlord friendly because it mounts to the edge of the door in minutes. No holes are drilled.

Call Private-Door for more info/video 1-800-249-0674 (voice) 630-629-1230 (fax) their web site is [www.privatedoor.com](http://www.privatedoor.com)

## **Enhanced Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Offered at PCIL**

Located in Ewing, New Jersey, the Progressive Center for Independent Living (PCIL) has hired a consultant to be involved with the deaf and hard of hearing residents of Mercer and Hunterdon Counties. Madeline Yuhas is usually in the office on Wednesdays. She can be reached at 609-530-1234 TTY or 609-530-1166 Fax. PCIL is located at 831 Parkway Avenue B-2, Ewing, New Jersey

## **NURSING HOME FOR THE DEAF-OPEN HOUSE**

New Jersey residents only!

The Deaf Senior Citizen Nursing Home Committee has exciting news to report. A small pilot nursing home program for deaf patients is ready to start at Saint Clare's Hospital, in Dover, New Jersey. Saint Claire's wants to start with a few deaf patients, to make sure that they will be accessible and meet their needs.

If you know any deaf people who cannot take care of themselves and need nursing home care contact: (973) 989-3000 (voice) for St. Clare's Hospital, Continuing Care Pavilion at 400 West Blackwell Street (RT 46) in Dover, NJ 07801-2525

## **Summer Congressional Internship**

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is pleased to announce that grants from 2002 founding sponsors have been awarded to fund a Summer Congressional Internship Program for college students with disabilities. This program will provide an opportunity for students with disabilities to work on Capitol Hill and acquire valuable work experience that will enrich their academic studies. Interns will gain insight into Congressional office operations, how public policy is developed, and the roles of the various constituencies in the legislative / political process. AAPD invites undergraduate students with disabilities to apply for this program. For full details, to apply online, or to obtain an application, visit: <http://www.aapd-dc.org/docs/2003Congressinterns4.html>

Questions may be directed to: Olegario "Ollie" D. Cantos VII (800) 840-8844, (202) 457-0046 (voice/TTY) or [GeneralCnsl@aol.com](mailto:GeneralCnsl@aol.com)

## **Become a School Social Worker with Deaf Children and Their Families**

The MSW Program of the Gallaudet University Department of Social Work has received a major grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of this grant is to train social workers to work with deaf and hard of hearing children in school settings and with their families.

The training opportunity is open to applicants who are U.S. citizens, interested in becoming a school social worker, have a liberal arts undergraduate degree with a GPA of 3.0 or above, and who would like to have internships in both mainstream schools and residential settings for deaf children.

Those selected for the grant will receive half tuition scholarships and stipends of \$2,500 as support for each of the four semesters of the program. Participants must be willing to work in a school setting after graduation.

Students will develop communication competence and knowledge and skills to work with a full range of deaf and hard of hearing children including those with additional disabilities. There will be the opportunity to learn about issues such as the implications of national legislation for the education of deaf children, the

impact of cochlear implants, skill development in interventions with deaf teens, and the use of play therapy as an effective mode of intervention with deaf children.

[Their] program especially encourages deaf and hard of hearing applicants, those who already have beginning sign language competence, and students representing diverse racial and ethnic groups as well as those who have competence in other spoken languages, in order to match the needs of the widest group of children and families possible. Advanced standing with entry to the program in January is possible for those students who already have an undergraduate degree in social work and who can meet certain other academic and previous internship requirements.

For information contact via e-mail: [teresa.arcari@gallaudet.edu](mailto:teresa.arcari@gallaudet.edu)

Another way for interested persons to get information is to go to their web-page. It is at: <http://depts.gallaudet.edu/social.work/school-swk/index.html>

Information about applying to Gallaudet's graduate programs can be found at: <http://gradschool.gallaudet.edu/inquiry/inquiry.htm>

### **Advocacy Committee Forming**

Do you ever wish you weren't the only one writing letters when it comes to a problem with accessibility, local issues affecting people with disabilities and the government? Maybe this will help: starting this spring and Advocacy Committee is forming at DAWN to bring together people with strong feelings about issues regarding their quality of life.

By working together, a united voice is formed to contact legislators on issues such as creating permanent Offices for the Disabled in each county, allowing more affordable housing units to be created, insuring that those units are and remain accessible, as well as other issues that affect member's daily lives.

The Advocacy committee will work with the Monday Morning Project in each of the northwestern counties. One of the goals will be to create a "hot list" of volunteers willing to write and send e-mail to decision-makers who may be influenced by a concerted community response to issues. It is important to have this group in place especially when important bills are going through the legislature. Politicians can be influenced with community support on how they will vote.

The best part of being involved with this group is that participation can take place from one's home: just by having samples of letters to send and using the computer, one can become an advocate for change. Please contact the DAWN office if you are interested.

### **DAWN's Open House - June 4<sup>th</sup>**

The members meeting for Wednesday, June 4th is being replaced with an Open-house at the Warren County Vo-tech in Washington. If you would like to join us and represent DAWN at the open-house, please call the office to register. (973) 361-5666

## **Disability Rights Council of Greater Washington vs. CVS**

The Disability Rights Council of Greater Washington (DC) [wants] to know the experiences of people with disabilities who have been to CVS stores.

Their "investigation showed that CVS stores regularly blocked their aisles with merchandise... So that people who used wheelchairs or walkers could not get around the store. Aisles...were hazardous to people with low vision. Further investigation revealed that the stores had photo counters and pharmacy drop-off counters that are too high... Parking lots are not striped in accordance with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines.

...the company [CVS] agreed to fix the stores in the Washington, D.C. area, but they have continued to build new stores with the same violations and failed to correct the violations in older stores throughout the country. [They] need to know the experiences of people with disabilities who have been to CVS and observed these violations."

(292) 234-7550 Voice  
e-mail: [rights@erols.com](mailto:rights@erols.com)

## **DAWN Events - (Transportation provided.)**

### Members Meetings & Recreation:

Thursday, March 20 - Dinner-out 6:30-8:30 Andover Diner

Wednesday, April 2 - Member's Meeting 7:00-8:45 - NJWIN Ticket to Work

Saturday, April 26\* - Lunch 12:00-2:00 p.m. Perkins Restaurant (\*This is a date/time change)

Wednesday, May 7- Member's Meeting 7:00-8:45 - Health Care Consumer Assistance Program-NJP&A

Thursday, May 15 - Dinner-out 6:30-8:30 Chevy's Fresh Mex

Wednesday, June 4 - Open House 3:00-8:00 p.m. Warren County Vo-tech

June - Concert in the Park Date to be announced.

Call the office (973) 361-5666 no later than one week prior to an event to schedule transportation; and if you need a special accommodation (assistant, interpreter, Braille, etc), please inform us at least two weeks prior to an event. Attention Deaf Members: Please call (TTY 973-361-6032) if you need an ASL interpreter. Call your county's transportation department two days prior to an event to establish your pick-up time. To assist the scheduler and to show consideration for your fellow travelers, if you need to cancel pick-up, call transit at least two days in advance, or as soon as possible.

## **DAWN Programs (Transportation NOT provided.)**

### Young Adult Recreation:

Friday, March 14 - Saturday, March 15 Overnight stay at Embassy Suites in Parsippany "Limited space, first come, first served" Cost: \$45.00



Friday, April 11 - Dinner and a movie. Headquarters Plaza, Bennigan's and Clearview Cinema

Approximate cost: \$20.00

Friday, May 9 - Montville Recreation Center for outdoor sports and ice cream sundaes. Cost: \$0.00

Friday, June 13 - Rockaway Lanes Bowling. Cost: \$7.00/per person

*DAWN Board Meetings:*

4:00-7:00 p.m. - 4th Thursday of each month except for November and December when the meeting will be held on the 3rd Thursday due to holidays.

*Other Events:*

Abilities Expo April 11-13, 2003 New Jersey Convention Center Edison, New Jersey

<http://www.abilitiesexpo.com>

Adjustment to Vision Loss Conference - 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday, May 3 at the Sheraton Conference Center in Eatontown, New Jersey

National Council on Independent Living Conference (NCIL) June 4-7, 2003, Washington, DC. If you have any questions, please call Natalie Shear Associates, Conference Coordinators, at 800-833-1354 or 202-833-4456. Both telephone numbers are voice / TTY.

Parents Anonymous Support Group (parents of children with a disability) hold their meetings on Wednesdays. If you are interested in joining or have questions, please call: (973) 328-0800