



# DAWN AWAKENINGS

## Awaken to Independence

DAWN AWAKENINGS

Fall 2012

**THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PHILOSOPHY  
ASSERTS THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SHOULD  
HAVE THE SAME CIVIL RIGHTS, CHOICES, AND  
CONTROL AS DO PEOPLE WITHOUT DISABILITIES.**

We are just weeks away from the next Presidential election, which is an opportunity to exercise one of our most important civil liberties – the right to vote.

People with disabilities have fought long and hard to have the same access to their government and to the same opportunities and rights as people without disabilities. If we want others to care about and support our rights and respect our determination to control our own lives, how can we afford not to demonstrate the value we place on our rights by diligently exercising them?

If you haven't followed some of the key policy issues or familiarized yourself with the candidates, their running mates, or their platforms, there is still time to start. Between network and cable TV, radio, newspapers and other print media, social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.), internet news blogs and other sources, information has never been easier to obtain.

Did you know that in New Jersey, ANY registered voter can vote by mail FOR ANY REASON? It's so easy! You can visit the website to obtain a downloadable, printable Application to Vote by Mail form for your county of residence, complete it, and mail it in. To obtain this form, go to <http://www.state.nj.us/state/elections/voting-information-vote-by-mail.html>.

Advocacy – both systems advocacy and self-advocacy – is at the heart of the values embodied in the Independent Living and Disability Rights movements and DAWN's work as your CIL. DAWN will be glad to help you to get your voter registration, and complete any steps necessary in order for you to achieve the goal of exercising your voting right.

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### Presidential Debate Schedule



**President  
Barack Obama and  
Governor  
Mitt Romney**

**October 22, 2012  
9:00-10:30 p.m.  
Foreign policy**

## From the Executive Director's Desk

Visit our new website at [www.dawncil.org](http://www.dawncil.org)!

**Some of our exciting new features include:**

- DAWN's latest Tweets via Twitter
- Downloadable forms, flyers and brochures
- Online inquiries
- Online donations
- Multifunctional calendar
- Advocacy page including bills in the current legislative session, "Find Your Legislator," and various advocacy agencies

**Many thanks to [Grassroots.org](http://Grassroots.org) for providing us with free web design services!**

Dear Friends,

Fall is always a very busy and exciting time for DAWN. It is the beginning of our new year and typically a time when many changes occur within the organization. This year in particular we are experiencing many changes. We are working on 2 very exciting initiatives which will allow DAWN to offer consumers a more comprehensive menu of services than ever before. These initiatives, life skills and employment related services, were a direct result of input received from our membership at our annual forum last year. DAWN staff has been collaborating with community partners to create a life skills curriculum that will be available for students currently in school as well as those post graduation. We hope to launch this new program in early 2013.

In addition, we have explored implementing an employment related initiative to assist individuals with preparing for work, getting work and keeping work.

We were very fortunate to have received start up funding from the Kessler Foundation for this exciting new initiative entitled "DAWN Employment Network Services" (DENS). This new program will be the focus of our upcoming membership meeting on October 24<sup>th</sup>. I hope you will consider joining us to hear more.

Also, we will be hosting our annual meeting on November 28<sup>th</sup>. The annual meeting is an opportunity for DAWN members to meet the Board of Directors, to hear about the accomplishments of the organization in the past year and the plans for the future and to share their thoughts about the where DAWN is headed in the future. I encourage you to join us and share your thoughts. More details will follow in the upcoming weeks.

Finally, if you haven't already taken a look at our new website, I encourage you to do so. It is fabulous.

*Carmela*

***P.S. Don't forget to vote!***

## A College Student's Perspective on "Employment First"

My name is Lori-Ann Norcross. I'm 22 years old and I'm interning at DAWN under the area of transition working with DAWN's Independent Living Specialist, Helen Bradfield. I go to East Stroudsburg University and my major is in Rehabilitation Services. I would love to pursue a career in transition. As college students, my classmates and I are learning all the new outlooks on transition. The main one is a movement called "Employment First." In April 2012, New Jersey became the 14th state to adopt this initiative. Employment First says that employment is the first and preferred outcome for all people.

When I hear the words "employment first" I think of Tony Coelho, author of the American's with Disabilities Act, saying, "Give us the right to be fired!" People with disabilities deserve to have equal rights, which means being included in competitive employment, having real wages, real benefits, and being in a real business setting. Raising expectations for people who have a disability is very important; no matter how severe the disability is, every individual has valuable capabilities. In order to achieve this we must focus on strengths-based practices. Being able to self-advocate and being able to express personal strengths and interests is key to placement in a job in which any individual will be successful and happy. Parents, teachers, and agencies must work together to help students find their strengths and interests. After graduating high school, these young adults should walk away with knowledge and experiences of different jobs so they can pursue and start a career in something they love.

## A Glimpse of the Future at DAWN

We all experience transitions in life, and DAWN is about to embark on a transition of our own.

Firstly, changes at the State level will result in significant changes in the way DAWN will deliver youth transition services from this year forward. Intensive planning is taking place among collaborating agencies, including the State of New Jersey's Department of Labor and Workforce Development – Division of Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) and the Department of Education – Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and the 11 Centers for Independent Living serving the various counties in NJ including DAWN. As part of the transformation, DAWN's school-based student transition program, STEP-UP, no longer will be offered in its current form. Instead, DAWN will offer Morris, Sussex and Warren counties a robust menu of transition services on a fee-for-service basis. Just as with STEP-UP, local schools will have the opportunity to retain and offer DAWN's transition services to their transitioning students and families. We will be adding a Transition page to our website at [www.dawncil.org](http://www.dawncil.org) in the near future, and will be posting updates there as we gain more information.



Secondly, DAWN was recently awarded a \$45,000 Community Employment Grant from the prestigious Kessler Foundation to establish DAWN as an "Employment Network" service provider under the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program. Once we gain Employment Network status, DAWN will begin providing Independent Living services aimed at helping adults with disabilities who are currently receiving SSI or SSDI benefits but want to secure and sustain gainful employment. In the future, we envision continuing to work with DVRS to help people reach their employment goals. As part of this effort, DAWN will offer a continuum of Independent Living services to transitioning students to support successful outcomes in all areas and at all stages of their adult lives. With significant changes to our youth transition services and the implementation of a new employment services program, DAWN is making a bold transition of our own to support others in transitioning to adult life and toward gainful employment.

## DAWN Summer Picnic



On June 2, a group of 59 of DAWN's consumers, members, friends and family joined the agency staff for a day full of fun and socializing at Hedden Park in Randolph. The annual summer picnic is always one of the highlights of the year for the DAWN community. It's a great way for members and staff alike to get to know each other and share some quality time.

The weather cooperated this year with plenty of sunshine. There were outdoor games, delicious barbecued food, balloon flower centerpieces and of course a huge cake!

A spirited game of bingo went on late into the afternoon, and just about everyone got to take home a prize.

## Medicaid Open Enrollment Period

*New Jersey Medicaid and NJ FamilyCare beneficiaries can change their current health plan during the Annual Medicaid Open Enrollment Period, which Began October 1 and ends November 15. If you are satisfied with your health plan, you don't need to do anything. If you choose a new health plan, the effective date will be January 1, 2013 and continue through the calendar year. You can select from the following health plans:*

- Amerigroup Community Care (Serving all counties except Salem)
- Healthfirst Health Plan of New Jersey (serving Atlantic, Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren Counties)
- Horizon NJ Health (Serving all counties)
- United Healthcare Community Plan (serving all counties)

*To change health plans, call 1-866-472-5338(TTY # 1-800-701-0720). Before you switch, make sure your preferred doctors and medical facilities participate in the new health plan.*



### Disability in Film on TCM

Throughout the month of October, Turner Classic Movies will explore the ways people with disabilities have been portrayed in film. On behalf of Inclusion in the Arts, Lawrence Carter-Long will join TCM host Robert Osborne for The Projected Image: A History of Disability in Film. The special month-long exploration will air on Tuesdays, beginning Oct. 2 at 8 p.m. ET. All films will be presented with both closed captioning and audio description.

### Accessibility Website Run by You

Access Together uses crowd-sourcing to collect community accessibility information. This allows any person to use their mobile phone or computer to add information about local businesses and services in their neighborhood. Information collected is then available to the Access Together community. Join the effort to map out accessibility in your neighborhood at <http://www.accesstogether.org> and help build a more accessible world!

## Voting Guide

### How to Vote by Mail

Any NJ registered voter may vote by absentee ballot.

1. **Register to vote:** Obtain the registration application for your county by calling (609) 292-3760 or online at <http://nj.gov/state/elections/voting-information-voter-registration-forms.html>.
2. **Apply for an absentee ballot:** Download and complete the Absentee Ballot Application from <http://nj.gov/state/elections/voting-information-vote-by-mail.html>. You can also apply in person to your County Clerk up until 3 pm the day before an election.
3. **Complete and return your absentee ballot:** Your ballot will be mailed to you along with instructions and a return envelope. Mail your completed ballot back to your County Board of Elections (the address will be on the envelope). Your ballot must be received by 8pm on election day.

### Reporting Questions or Concerns

While some voters with disabilities may choose to use absentee ballots as a means to vote and to avoid physical access issues, this cannot be the only alternative given to those voters.

If a person with a disability is experiencing an access issue on Election Day, they can call the Election Protection Coalition for advice or guidance at 1-866-OURVOTE. If an individual with a disability believes that a form of voter access discrimination has occurred, they can file a formal complaint with the Department of Justice Division of Civil Rights Voting Section at 1-800-253-3931 or by TTY at 1-800-877-267 x 8971. There is also an online form people can use to report any accessibility concerns

at <http://www.state.nj.us/state/elections/voting-access-feedback-form.html>.

For more information on elections, including your registration status and polling place, contact the NJ Division of Elections at 609-292-3760.

### Upcoming Election Deadlines

#### October 16, 2012

Deadline for Voter Registration

#### October 30, 2012

Deadline to apply for a Mail-In Ballot by mail

#### November 5, 2012 - by 3:00 p.m.

Deadline to Apply for Mail-In Ballot in Person

#### November 6, 2012

General Election

Polling locations open 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.



## In Memoriam

We regret to inform everyone of the passing of 2 of DAWN's members.

Janet Masino, a long-time member and friend of DAWNcil, passed away on Saturday, September 15th. During the last year of her life, Janet went through much pain, but she didn't let that stop her and always stayed positive.

Phillip Guenther, another DAWNcil member, passed away on Thursday, June 21. Philip enjoyed music, electronics, computers and being around family and friends.

## DAWN in the Community



Staff from DAWN's Early Intervention Unit (pictured: Carla Malatesta, Sherry Polhemus and Jeanine Paszkiel) took part in "Children's Day" at the Sussex County Fair on August 7. It was a fun filled day, where the EI staff got an opportunity to meet and greet the children of Sussex County. We demonstrated the many benefits of blowing bubbles for oral motor development.



## Disability Pride Parade



On Friday, October 5, 2012, DAWN staff along with hundreds of others gathered for the 2012 NEW JERSEY DISABILITY PRIDE PARADE & CELEBRATION in downtown Trenton, New Jersey. The purpose of this parade was to bring people, organizations and businesses together to celebrate pride with the disability community and to promote the belief that disability is a natural and beautiful part of human diversity while generating national awareness for the disability community. The NJ DISABILITY PRIDE PARADE & CELEBRATION was organized and hosted by the Alliance Center for Independence (ACI) with the support of the statewide disability community. A great day was had by all.



Staff members Marie Liston and Helena Matava participated in the Health Fair at Shappelle Park in Phillipsburg, NJ on August, 11. Individuals participated in health screenings and were able to access information from social service agencies in Warren

## Upcoming DAWN Events

- Tues. October 16 1:00pm - 3:00pm Clever Crafty Corner: Halloween crafts at DAWN's Denville office at 30 Broad St.
- Thurs. October 18 7:00pm - 9:00pm Dinner Out (General Recreation): Dinner at TGI Friday's, 3835 U.S. 46 in Parsippany.
- Wed. October 24 6:00pm - 8:00pm DAWN Membership Meeting: Info on DAWN's new employment programs. At DAWN's Denville office at 30 Broad St.
- Sun. November 4 12:30pm - 4:30pm Franki's Fund Gala: See below for information.
- Thurs. November 8 6:00pm - 9:00pm Holiday Shopping (General Recreation): Rockaway Townsquare Mall, 301 Mt Hope Ave in Rockaway Township.
- Wed. November 28 Time TBD DAWN Annual Meeting: Location TBD.
- Sat. December 15 12:00pm - 4:00pm Holiday Gala: The Skylands at Randolph, 792 Rt. 10 West. Call Marc Molde at 973-625-1940 ext. 211 for details and cost.

### Franki's Fund Gala



*"The mission of the 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."*

Join us at Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes, NJ on Sunday, November 4, 2012 for good food, fun music, terrific prizes, and great company! Proceeds will support Franki's Fund, a program designed to meet the growing demand for programs and services for young adults with disabilities.

For more information, call us at 973-625-1940, TDD 973-625-1932, or toll free at 1-888-383-DAWN (3296).

### Brain Injury Support Group

This group allows persons with brain injury and their family members to meet others in similar situations, gain valuable emotional support, obtain information, and hear speakers discuss a variety of brain injury topics. DAWN's Brain Injury Support Group is affiliated with the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey. The group meets the third Thursday of each month at 6pm. For more information, contact Carmela Slivinski at 973-625-1940 or [cslivinski@dawncil.org](mailto:cslivinski@dawncil.org).

### Living Well with a Disability

Living Well with a Disability is an eight-week workshop that teaches ways to create a healthier and happier life for ourselves. To find out more, contact Peter Gimbel at [pgimbel@dawncil.org](mailto:pgimbel@dawncil.org) or 973-625-1940. Meetings are held in Denville and Hackettstown. Limited transportation may be available.

DAWN Center for Independent Living  
30 Broad Street  
Suite 5  
Denville NJ 07834



Phone: 973-625-1940  
Fax: 973-625-1942  
TTY: 973-625-1932  
Email: [info@dawncil.org](mailto:info@dawncil.org)

We are on the web!  
[www.dawncil.org](http://www.dawncil.org)

### DAWN MISSION STATEMENT

DAWN Center for Independent Living empowers people with disabilities to strive for equality and to take control of their own lives by:

- Providing the tools that encourage independence and self-advocacy.
- Promoting public awareness of the needs, desires and rights of individuals living with disabilities.
- Offering community activities that create new experiences and opportunities.
- Creating informed communities that advance the Independent Living Philosophy.

### DAWN PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- Information and Referral
- Living Well with a Disability
- Next Chapter Book Club
- Aktion Club (Morris County only)
- Nursing Facility Transition
- Independent Living Skills Training
- School to Adult Life (*STEP-UP* Program)
- Advocacy
- Peer Support
- Recreation
- SAIL
- Care Management