



# DAWN AWAKENINGS

## Awaken to Independence

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Winter 2014

### Making Room to Grow

This is a time of growth and change for DAWN. As of January 2, DAWN now administers the grant for the Morris County Early Intervention Service Coordination Unit. Early Intervention is a program for children 0-3 years old with developmental delays that provides families with resources to address these issues. With this contract award, DAWN aims to serve roughly 500 additional families.

We have added 10 new staff members for Morris County Early Intervention Service Coordination and other programs. To make room for our staff, DAWN's Denville office has moved. The new location is at 66 Ford Road, Suite #121, Denville, NJ 07834. Our Sparta office has also moved to accommodate our needs, but it hasn't moved far: we have moved to Unit A in the same building at 34 White Lake Road!

As we settle in to our offices, our new programs are taking off! The Skills for Independent Living (SkIL) life skills program for youth and young adults is currently gearing up for its third cycle, and DAWN's Independent Living Transition Specialist, certified Special Education teacher Heather Goldschmitt, is recruiting new participants (see page 2 for information). She is also getting ready to teach new courses for the It's All About Work program, which facilitates the transition into the world of work for youth and adults with disabilities.

DAWN Employment Network Services has helped several people with employment-related goals since it was launched in early 2013. We also recently became an Employment Network under the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program. Further, our new It's All About Work program offers an educational course and individualized services to give adults the skills to find and maintain employment. Independent Living Employment Specialist Lindsay Tuman has been hard at work delivering these programs, helping consumers develop resumes, work with DVRS Counselors, create plans for self-employment, and more. Lindsay is a Certified Work Incentives and Benefits Practitioner, and can answer questions about the impact of employment on benefits and the many work incentives available to those interested in achieving independence through employment.

As you can see, it's going to be a busy 2014 for DAWN!

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### In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we notify the DAWN community of the passing of one of our founding board members, Kathy Battista, who passed away on January 29, 2014.

Kathy was a member of the Board of Directors from DAWN's inception and spent many hours of her time over the years supporting and promoting the agency and its work. She will be fondly remembered.

## From the Executive Director's Desk

Happy New Year to all! I hope 2014 is a Healthy and prosperous year for you and your loved ones.

As you can see, 2013 ended on a very busy but positive note for DAWN, and we are very excited about the prospects for 2014. There are many new and exciting programs available which we hope you will take advantage of.

We are thrilled to be in our beautiful new office. And a very special "Thank You" must go to Mrs. Judi Rodaman for identifying DAWN as the recipient of a large donation of high quality furniture when the company she works for was renovating. Stop by anytime and look for details on our Open House planned for Spring 2014.

Best Regards,

*Carmela*

## DAWN Programs Seeking Participants

### **Skills for Independent Living (SkIL)**

DAWN's second ever 72-hour cycle of the curriculum-based comprehensive life skills program for youth and young adults, Skills for Independent Living (SkIL) is going strong and will be finished in mid-February.

DAWN is funded by the United Way and other partners to deliver SkIL to eligible youth and young adults with disabilities, and in 2014 it will be open to residents of Morris, Sussex and Warren counties. The SkIL cycle will begin in February in Morris County, followed by a cycle held in Sussex County later in the year.

DAWN is now accepting pre-registration forms for the next cycle of the SkIL program. Space is limited, so if you are interested, you are encouraged to send us a form as soon as possible. For information, contact Heather Goldschmitt at 973-625-1940, ext. 214 or [hgoldschmitt@dawncil.org](mailto:hgoldschmitt@dawncil.org).

### **Living Well with a Disability**

Living Well with a Disability is an 8-week workshop for adults with disabilities about how to improve their quality of life. Throughout the program, participants work on a personal goal of their own choosing. They also discuss and learn about a variety of helpful topics, including depression prevention, communicating with healthcare providers, nutrition, exercise and self-advocacy. The group members listen to each other and develop a supportive community. They come away with valuable information, positive new habits and lasting friendships.

Living Well with a Disability will begin on Thursday afternoons in April 2014. Meetings will be held at the Hackettstown Senior Center. For information, contact Peter Gimbel at 973-625-1940, ext. 219 or [pgimbel@dawncil.org](mailto:pgimbel@dawncil.org).

## Important Phone Numbers for Information Related to the Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”)

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*As the Affordable Care Act has gone into effect, many people have had difficulty understanding how the law impacts them. Below are some phone numbers that may be helpful. You can also call DAWN at 973-625-1940 and ask to speak to an Independent Living Specialist.*

### **Marketplace/Exchange Phone Number**

For information about the new health care law and new health insurance options from the federal government, call The Health Insurance Marketplace Call Center:

1-800-318-2596 (TTY #: 1-855-889-4325)

### **Information on Expanded Medicaid Eligibility**

As of October 1, 2013, NJ Medicaid has expanded its eligibility rules to allow single adults and childless couples to apply for NJ Familycare. To find out if the changes have made you eligible for Medicaid, you can call the Health Benefits Coordinator at 1-800-701-0710 (TTY #: 1-800-701-0720). More information about the NJ Medicaid Expansion is available at [www.njfamilycare.org](http://www.njfamilycare.org). You can also call your county’s Social Services office:

Morris County: 973-829-8176

Sussex County: (973) 383-3600

Warren County: (908) 475-6301

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## **Upcoming Event: The Abilities Expo**

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On May 2-4, 2014, the Abilities Expo for the New York Metro region will take place at the New Jersey Convention and Expo Center in Edison. As described on their website at [abilitiesexpo.com](http://abilitiesexpo.com): “Now in seven cities across the nation, each Abilities Expo offers three days of access to the latest technologies and resources for ALL disabilities, informative workshops on issues that most resonate with the Community and fun activities like adaptive sports, dance, assistive animal demos and more.”

Each year, the Abilities Expo hosts workshops, demonstrations of wheelchair sports and accessible recreation, and displays including vendors of everything disability related, from mobility equipment to adaptive clothing. Representatives from the State Independent Living Council, DAWN and other Centers for Independent Living will be there to talk about services. The Abilities Expo is a great place to see some of what the world of disability has to offer. Especially if you have never been there before, this is a free event you may want to check out.

## Recent Events

### Annual Meeting

Every year, the members of DAWN Center for Independent Living have an Annual Membership Meeting. Members share a buffet-style meal as they catch up with each other and hear a presentation about DAWN's past successes and plans for the future. They also elect board members and vote on issues of importance to the organization.

This year, the Annual Meeting took place at Trinity House in Hackettstown on Tuesday, November 19th, 2013. Everyone had a good time, and there were a lot of new developments.

An employee appreciation initiative was launched, and Tatiana Smith was chosen by a staff vote as DAWN's first Employee of the Year. It was a much-deserved recognition for her dedicated service to the DAWN community.

DAWN members also elected Marisa Patawaran-Tonnesen to our Board of Directors (see her biographical info below).



### Holiday Gala

As always, the 2013 Annual Holiday Gala was a lot of fun! On Sunday, December 7, 2014, the DAWN community came together at Skylands at Randolph for an afternoon of dancing, good food and great friends. Staff, consumers, family, friends and board members alike had a wonderful day.

If you missed out on all the fun this time, do your best to make it in 2014. You'll be glad you did!

## New Board Member: Marisa Patawaran-Tonnesen



The newest member of DAWN's Board of Directors, Marisa Patawaran-Tonnesen is the president of Pinnacle Star Financial & Insurance Services. Pinnacle Star Financial & Insurance Services is a total solution company that provides a full-range of financial and insurance services to individuals, businesses and organizations.

In addition, she is a trusted independent Financial Advisor and Investment Advisor Representative. Marisa volunteers her time at Family Promise of Morris County and previously held positions as Board Member of New Jersey Sharing Network Foundation and Roxbury Township Coordinator for National Day of Prayer for two consecutive years. She enjoys spending time with her husband and two sons.

## Recent Events (Continued)

### Franki's Fund Gala



Lamp made from a bottle at a Franki's Fund activity.

On November 3, 2013, community members and friends attended DAWN's Franki's Fund Annual Gala at Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. There was a luncheon and a tricky tray auction with lots of great items to bid on. Samples of the beautiful work created by our Franki's Fund Participants were available for purchase. Live musical entertainment was performed by Claudia Baumgaertner Lemmerz.

Proceeds from the event went to support Franki's Fund, a creative arts program for young adults with disabilities. 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 help enrich their lives and expand their horizons.

Many thanks to everyone who attended the Franki's Fund Gala and to all the individuals and local businesses that generously donated auction items.



### Employment Stakeholder Event

On October 10, 2013, with support from the Kessler Foundation, DAWN hosted a training and informational event open to local employers interested in creating opportunities in their workplaces for the successful employment of people with disabilities. The event, titled Community Partners in Workforce Inclusion, provided valuable training, tools, and resources to employers in the Morris, Sussex, and Warren county area to achieve positive outcomes in recruiting and retaining motivated, skilled employees with disabilities. Opening remarks were made by Elaine Katz, Senior Vice President of the Program Center at Kessler Foundation. The State Director of DVRS at the NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Alice Hunnicutt, delivered an informative and inspiring keynote address.

DAWN will be hosting two events in 2014 about employment and disability, slated for May and September.





## DAWN in the Community

### **Brain Injury: The Challenge of Change Conference** by Lindsay Tuman

DAWN staff members Carl Brand and Lindsay Tuman attended the Kessler Foundation's Brain Injury: The Challenge of Change conference on Friday, October 11th. The conference focused on various issues that may impact individuals with brain injury. The topics that were covered included health and wellness, social connections, community resources, and relationships. The panel discussion involved four individuals with traumatic brain injury talking about relationships and offering different scenarios and suggestions for the attendees.

### **Brain Injury Alliance Seminar** by Lindsay Tuman

On November 4th, the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey (BIANJ) hosted its Fall Regional Seminar: Returning to Work after Brain Injury. DAWN staff members Lindsay Tuman and Carl Brand were in attendance. Presenters included Barbara Geiger-Parker and Joanna Boyd from the Brain Injury Alliance (who provided an "Introduction to Brain Injury"), Dr. Drew Nagle (a neuropsychologist who discussed assessment strategies to help people with brain injuries return to work), and Judi Weinberger, M.Ed., LRC, CBIST (who presented on "Issues and Strategies on Returning to Work after Brain Injury"). There was also a panel of three individuals who discussed their experiences in regards to returning to work after sustaining brain injuries. State services for Traumatic Brain Injury were also discussed.

*Lindsay Tuman and Carl Brand co-facilitate a BIANJ support group at DAWN's Denville office.*

### **Kessler Stroll 'n Roll**

On October 13th at Bloomfield Park in Bloomfield, N.J., DAWN staff members Lindsay Tuman and Helena (Nina) Matava represented DAWN at the 12th Annual Kessler Stroll n' Roll. This event supports rehabilitation research, disability employment initiatives and the N.J. chapter of ThinkFirst — a national injury prevention program for kindergarten pupils through high school seniors. This year's Stroll 'N Roll featured a 5K around Verona Park and other fun activities. Kids and adults enjoyed carnival games and food, balloon animals, and face painting. Local businesses, sponsors and disability service agencies (including DAWN) set up booths to provide information to those who attended.

### **Morris County Health and Wellness Fair** by Ountra Grier

On the morning of October 18th, Care Manager Roberta Schwartz and Independent Living Specialist Ountra Grier attended the Morris County Health and Wellness Fair. The fair took place at Morris View Healthcare Center. Many agencies and organizations throughout Morris County were present to provide information on healthy eating and wellness. A variety of resources and contact information was available to browse through or take, and tables were set up with healthy food choices.

## DAWN in the Community (continued)

### **NJ Alliance for Full Participation Meeting** by Carolee Marano

On November 12, 2013, DAWN's Independent Living Program Supervisor, Carolee Marano, attended a meeting of the New Jersey Alliance for Full Participation (NJ AFP). The NJ AFP is comprised of a consortium of leaders including disability services providers and state representatives, as well as professional, parent, and self-advocates, all working toward community inclusion for people with disabilities. The November meeting focused on a current project of the NJ AFP to develop strategies implementing the Employment First initiative in New Jersey.

In April 2012, Governor Christie declared New Jersey as the 14th state to adopt Employment First, making a statewide commitment to advance policies and practices on all levels that support the philosophy that employment should be the first and preferred outcome for people with disabilities.

DAWN has responded to the priority expressed by our membership and state initiatives by launching new employment services, including Independent Living employment services, "It's All About Work" curriculum-based and individualized services, and Employment Network services under SSA's Ticket to Work program.

### **Warren County Excellence in Accessibility Award**



Congratulations to Enzo's Pasta Grill in Washington, NJ for winning Warren County's Thomas M. Kennedy Excellence in Accessibility Award! This annual award recognizes individuals, businesses, and organizations that are user-friendly and accessible to all. It was presented at the Warren County Freeholders' meeting on November 13th.

DAWN's Executive Director, Carmela Slivinski, was present at the ceremony.

## Next Chapter Book Club

The Next Chapter Book club (NCBC) provides individuals ages 16 and up with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to read and learn to read, talk about books, and make friends in a fun, community setting. NCBC meets weekly in local bookstores and cafes across the country to read and discuss books of their choosing. NCBC members range from those who read well to those who do not read at all. DAWN currently sponsors an NCBC chapter in Sussex County. We also intend to begin NCBC chapters in Morris and Warren Counties. We are currently seeking volunteer facilitators and potential members for new NCBCs in these areas. If you are interested in volunteering with the NCBC or becoming a member of a new chapter of the club, please contact Carmela Slivinski at 973-625-1940.

## DAWN Shopping Bags Still Available

Yellow DAWN logo on dark green. \$5 for one, \$4 for each additional bag. 5 for \$20! To order, contact Sherry at 973 383-0870 or [spolhemus@dawncil.org](mailto:spolhemus@dawncil.org).

66 Ford Rd.  
Suite 121  
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)

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### 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 AND MORE:

- Independent Living Skills Training
- DDD Support Coordination
- Living Well with a Disability
- Skills for Independent Living (SkIL)
- Early Intervention Service Coordination
- Aktion Club (Morris County only)
- Brain Injury Alliance Support Group
- Working Well with a Disability
- Advocacy
- Peer Support
- Recreation
- Information and Referral
- Next Chapter Book Club
- Care Management
- It's All About Work
- Employment/EN Services

*For questions or comments about the newsletter, contact the Newsletter Coordinator, Peter Gimbel, at [pgimbel@dawncil.org](mailto:pgimbel@dawncil.org) or 973-625-1940 ext. 219.*