Issue 01  |  Summer 2015

ADA GALA
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Amy Van Dyken

SpoFit Heat Repeats
RUGBY TEAM NAT’L CHAMPS AGAIN

MovePHX
PUBLIC TRANSIT’S FUTURE

Downtown Stadiums Score
EQUAL ACCESS IS PRIORITY

A Tribute to our History
Phil highlights ADA and Disability Rights

A publication of Arizona Bridge to Independent Living (ABIL)
On July 18th, individuals and organizations in Arizona will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ADA, with Amy Van Dyken as the event’s keynote speaker. This Olympic swimming champion also started a foundation, which provides resources and medical equipment to people with spinal cord injuries. ABIL is delighted to have Amy grace the cover of our first edition of Livability.
I am so very pleased to bring you this first edition of ABIL’s new quarterly publication, LivAbility. LivAbility is one part of ABIL’s new re-branding process that you will be noticing over the next six months. Why the name LivAbility, you might ask? Well, good question! Actually, there were several reasons why we chose LivAbility. First, we thought the name was clever and memorable. Or, at least some of us did. Second, you can still see ABIL in the name. I thought that was part of the cleverness. But most importantly, we thought LivAbility was encompassing of what we envision this publication to become and be about: people of all disabilities, with all kinds of abilities, just living their lives like everyone else.

Please be assured. We still envision LivAbility to continue the great tradition of The Bridge newsletter in providing current and reliable disability news, information and advocacy that you’ve come to expect from us. We will never change from that longstanding commitment. However, we also hope to explore bringing you other disability-related content that will be fun, interesting, and useful in your journey living life with a disability or with someone you love.

We also envision LivAbility to be collaborative with our community partners and be interactive. Thus, LivAbility will include news and information from a wide variety of community partners and be a forum for collecting ideas and opinions. We’re not sure exactly where this might take us as it evolves, but we want to be as creative and open minded about it as possible. That’s where you come in. We want to hear from you. We want you to be a part of this. As we develop LivAbility over the next year or so, please tell us what you think. Tell us what you’d like us to publish. Eventually, we’ll create a web portal to facilitate this interactive process. Keep a look out for it in the future.

Finally, as a follow-up to my last newsletter message, I’d like to update you on our ABIL re-branding initiative. As I mentioned in May, ABIL is exploring ways to re-brand its public image to more accurately reflect what we do as an organization and who we serve. We also want to create better community awareness of ABIL and how we help people with disabilities. This includes becoming more consistent in everything we do and promote to the public.

Most prominent in all of this is ABIL’s name, Arizona Bridge to Independent Living, and our acronym ABIL. This has always been a challenge for us. By itself, people unfamiliar with ABIL don’t know what the acronym stands for. The full name is too long and sounds like a nursing home. Where does the Disability Empowerment Center fit in? What about the SpoFit? Thus, we felt like it was time to change our name and resolve some of the confusion. So, stay tuned as we roll out this exciting name change in October. I think you will find it to be encompassing of our mission and a welcome 360-degree departure from our current name.

Mr. Pangrazio has been the President & CEO of ABIL since 2000. His leadership and vision resulted in ABIL’s building of the Disability Empowerment Center, which opened in 2008, and the Sports and Fitness Center, which opened in 2011.
FEATURES

**Disability Rights & The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
On its 25th anniversary, ABIL President & CEO recounts the history and leadership behind the ADA

**Phoenix Stadiums and Equal Access**
A conversation with Nanette Odell, ADA Coordinator/Disability Services Manager

**Advancing Public Transportation**
Multiple perspectives on the future of Phoenix transportation, including its impact on the DEC

**Wheelchair Rugby Team National Champs**
SpoFit Heat defends title 2nd year in a row

**Path to Employment**
The key for people with disabilities to become more competitive in the work force
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On Wednesday, May 13, 2015, the City of Phoenix unveiled their updated accessibility icon. By unanimous vote of the City Council, Phoenix became the first city in Arizona to approve its use. Phoenix will make the change during scheduled maintenance of existing signs or in places where new signage is needed.

Peter Fischer, the City’s ADA coordinator stated, “This is a positive step in the direction for equality and equal access for everyone.” The modernized International Symbol for Accessibility (ISA) icon suggests motion and autonomy, emphasizing the person instead of the wheelchair. “It’s about people who are out there doing their jobs and getting around like everyone else, and that old stick figure just didn’t represent them as people,” said Fischer.

Private entities within Phoenix can also use the symbol if they choose, but they are not required to update. Individuals with questions regarding use of the icon should contact Phoenix’s ADA coordinator at Peter. Fischer@phoenix.gov.

This is a forward-thinking change for those whose disability requires accommodation in parking, paths of travel or entrances. Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton explained, “The new icon is much more representative of the disability community and the active lifestyles they have.”
CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

ABIL welcomes and celebrates diversity, from its workforce to the people it serves. In its efforts to promote diversity and inclusion, ABIL sponsors and supports programs and events for people with disabilities of all backgrounds. Some highlights include:

**Disability & Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Forum**

In its inaugural year, this forum focuses on the shared experiences, needs and resources for people in the LGBT communities and those with disabilities. Through presentations, resource panels, guided discussion and an open dialogue, this forum illustrates the commonalities of the historical struggles and current civil rights issues for the communities. By sharing the struggles for justice, inclusion and empowerment, we increase our awareness and ability to be allies.

**American Indian Disability Summit**

2015 marks the 11th year of this long-running summit. Its mission is to provide interaction, networking, education and support for American Indians with disabilities and their families, bridging opportunities and resources in rural and urban tribal communities. This event includes speakers, panels, workshops and a vendor/exhibitor hall, representing tribal, government, municipal, nonprofit and private resources and networking opportunities.

**African American Symposium on Disabilities**

Celebrating its fourth year in 2015 and serving as many as 264 participants, this symposium was co-founded by ABIL and Arizona Center for Disability Law (ACDL). This symposium aims to increase awareness of programs and services available to African Americans with disabilities at the Disability Empowerment Center (DEC) and the larger community, including employment, SSA work incentives, education, health care, advocacy and more. Features include keynote speakers, breakout sessions and a provider/exhibitor expo.
A Brief History of
DISABILITY RIGHTS &
THE AMERICANS WITH
DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

This historic piece of legislation was a watershed moment for civil rights for all people with disabilities throughout the world.

President George H.W. Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990. Standing left to right: Rev. Harold Wilkie; and Sandra Parrino, National Council on Disability; Seated left to right: Evan Kemp, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission chairman; and Justin Dart, President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities chairman.
On July 26th, 2015, we will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This historic piece of legislation was a watershed moment for civil rights for all people with disabilities throughout the world. In some ways, we can view the history of disability rights and the ADA in a very short window from the mid to late 1960s and early 1970s through to its legislative passage in 1990. From that perspective, the ADA was the culmination of merely two and a half decades of civil rights activities by disability advocates beginning from the Civil Rights Act of 1964. But in reality, the ADA is rooted in a long history far too important to forget. Understanding this history gives perspective to where we are today. After all, today we have a generation of young Americans with disabilities who never experienced life prior to the ADA.

I was age 19 in 1979 when I acquired my disability from a car accident. That was 11 years prior to the ADA. Although much had improved for people with disabilities by then, there was still so much more to do. At that age, I can remember the old-timers telling me how good I had it and how much worse it was back in the 1950s and 60s. It is for this reason I think it’s important to never forget the roots of the ADA and how long it took to get here. I hope this will inspire our younger ADA generation to keep the fire burning and never give up our fight for civil rights.

So the truth is, the ADA was centuries in the making, if not from the very beginning of humankind itself. The oppression and discrimination against people with disabilities can be traced to biblical times and probably even earlier. In Christian theology, disability was characterized as something that could be cast upon you for not following the teachings of God. Disability could be something you received from God if you did not obey his commandments or for doing wrong. Interestingly, the Bible also articulates compassion for people with disabilities, recognizes the need for certain protective laws, and even strikes fear and guarantees retribution against anyone who might commit an abusive act upon a
person with a disability (see Leviticus 19:14 and Deuteronomy 28:15, 28-29).

From medieval times, the Renaissance, the 18th and 19th centuries, the Industrial Revolution, and more than half of the 20th century, people with disabilities were subjected to a broad range of oppression and discrimination, as well as treatment and intervention. The middle ages saw the demonology or supernatural attributes to all kinds of disabling conditions. People with disabilities were faced with managing survival through a variety of supports such as family, neighbors, employers, charitable institutions and begging.

However, dramatic shifts occurred during the late 18th and early 19th century as institutional solutions and interventions become the norm. The problems posed by poverty and disability were solved by establishing institutions such as houses of correction, workhouses, asylums and “madhouses”. Segregated schools and institutions for persons with physical disabilities, deafness, blindness, mental illness and intellectual disability took root throughout Europe and North America.

Also during this time, professionals developed differential diagnosis to particularize disability, and devised treatment interventions and educational methods focused on specific “impairments”. Social Darwinism and the Eugenics movement began to take hold and gave rise to the belief that disability was considered a degrading of the species. The eugenics movement led to laws in the United States that segregated people with disabilities, and even prohibited marriage and procreation. Forced sterilization laws were viewed as normal and appropriate. In Buck v. Bell, (1927) the United States Supreme Court ruled that states have a legitimate interest in sterilizing people with intellectual disabilities.

In fact, California’s sterilization law became the model for Nazi Germany’s eugenics laws in 1933. Germany’s eugenics laws at first started with sterilization and later became the basis of killing some 200,000-275,000 people with disabilities through euthanasia.

Almost as appalling were “Ugly” and “Idiot” laws. From the late 1860s until the 1970s, several American cities had ugly laws making it illegal for persons with “unsightly or disgusting” disabilities to appear in public. The “Idiot Law” goes back to 1846, when it said, “No white person shall intermarry with a negro, and no insane person or idiot shall be capable of contracting marriage.”

The aftermath of World War II and the effects of Nazism and the Holocaust, combined with medical research on the causes of disability, led to an increasing respect for people with disabilities that eventually led to our recognition as equal citizens in the United States as evidenced by the passage of the ADA.

It was this long and shameful history of discrimination and oppression that set the stage for a disability rights movement that began shortly after the civil rights movement of African Americans. Disability rights advocates saw the opportunity to legislate change that would put an end to centuries of negative stereotypes and attitudes, and eliminate barriers to equal participation in American society. Thus, the road to the ADA was about to be paved as advocates began chipping away at societal barriers by securing modest legislative victories.

These victories included: 1) the Architectural Barriers Act (1968) which prohibits architectural barriers in all federally owned or leased buildings; 2) the Urban Mass Transit Act (1970) which requires that all new mass transit vehicles be equipped with wheelchair lifts; 3) the Rehabilitation Act (1973), particularly Title V, Section 504, which prohibits discrimination in federal programs and services and all other programs or services receiving federal funding; 4) the Education of all Handicapped Children Act (1975), now called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which requires free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment possible for children with disabilities; 5) the Air Carrier Access Act (1988) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in air travel

“Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down.”

- President George H. W. Bush
and provides for equal access to air transportation services; and 6) the Fair Housing Amendments Act (1988) which prohibits discrimination in housing against people with disabilities and families with children.

Of all these victories, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was from a legal perspective the most historic and profound. The Rehab Act banned discrimination on the basis of disability similar to how previous civil rights laws banned discrimination based on race, ethnic origin and sex or gender. For the first time, the exclusion and segregation of people with disabilities was viewed as discrimination. Previously, it had been assumed that the problems faced by people with disabilities, such as unemployment and lack of education, were inevitable consequences of the physical or mental limitations imposed by the disability itself. Through the Rehab Act, Congress recognized that the inferior social and economic status of people with disabilities was not a consequence of the disability itself, but instead was a result of societal barriers and prejudices. For the first time, people with disabilities were viewed as a class, a minority group, instead of being categorized based on diagnosis. Section 504 of the Rehab Act formed the basis of what would become the ADA.

The Rehab Act of 1973 was a monumental victory, but it took four years to get regulations written so enforcement could begin. In April 1977, activists demanding that Section 504 regulations be issued staged sit-ins at several Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) buildings throughout the country. The sit-in at the San Francisco HEW building, organized by Judy Heumann, lasted 28 days, longer than any civil demonstration in U.S. history.

Many other such grassroots demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience played a part in passing civil rights laws that improved life for people with disabilities. The
activism of Wade Blank in establishing the advocacy group called ADAPT led the fight for accessible public transportation, in-home personal assistance services, and an end to unnecessary institutionalization.

The rise of the Independent Living movement and the pioneering work of Ed Roberts, the “Father of the IL movement”, led to the establishment of more than 450 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) across the country. Ed, who had polio and lived in an iron lung and later on a ventilator, not only started the first CIL in the country in Berkley, California, but also became the Director of the California Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the same organization which 20 years earlier denied him services because he was “unemployable”.

Also prominent was the advocacy of Justin Dart, who is considered the “Father of the ADA”. Dart traveled twice to all 50 states and territories in the early and late 1980s, chronicling the injustices and discrimination endured by people with disabilities. As the newly appointed vice chair of the National Council on Disability, Dart used these two nationwide journeys to legitimize NCD’s report to Congress and justify the need for an ADA.

In March 1990, when the ADA seemed destined to be stalled in Congress, ADAPT held a march from the White House to the steps of the Capitol. Sixty disability activists with physical disabilities shed their crutches, wheelchairs, powerchairs and other assistive devices and proceeded to crawl up all 78 west side steps of the Capitol. A “tour” of the Capitol that ADAPT had arranged turned into a meeting in the Capitol Rotunda between ADAPT and the House Speaker and the House Minority Leader. Although the action resulted in the arrests of 104 grassroots demonstrators, the “Capital Crawl” as it would become to be known, pushed the stalled ADA bill out of committee.

Even the education that then Vice President George H.W. Bush received from the disability community during the Reagan Administration was instrumental in the passage of the ADA. President Reagan established the Task Force on Regulatory Relief under the leadership of Vice President George Bush. The Task Force was assigned to “de-regulate” regulations which were burdensome on businesses. After much protest by the disability community, the Administration announced a halt to all attempts to de-regulate Section 504. This was a tremendous victory, as it set the stage for the ADA and gave high officials of what later became the Bush administration an education on the importance of the concepts of non-discrimination contained in Section 504 in the lives of people with disabilities.

Ironically, it was President Bush who tipped off the disability community that Congress and his own advisors were trying to kill the ADA bill. Evan Kemp, Jr., who lived with spinal muscular atrophy since age twelve, was an attorney, Republican and Washington insider who had recently been named Chairman of the U.S. Employment Opportunity Commission by his friend President Bush. Subsequently, a month before passage of the ADA, Kemp called Wade Blank and Marca Bristo, then-president of the National Council on
Independent Living (NCIL), and they organized an evening march to the White House. That demonstration gave the President the excuse to ask why protesters were angry with the administration and send another strong message to White House staff that he wanted the ADA passed.

The rest is history, as President Bush signed the ADA into law on July 26th, 1990. There are so many other important people, organizations and events that contributed to the passage of the ADA. All of these are too numerous to cite in a short history of disability rights and the ADA, but if you want to learn more about the people and history that played a part in disability rights and the ADA, go to http://www.adalegacy.com/ada25.


Tom Olin

All black and white photos courtesy of Tom Olin, a photojournalist who has long been involved in the disability rights movement and is responsible for many iconic photos capturing disability rights history.
Whether you are hoping to see another Paul Goldschmidt homerun at the Arizona Diamondbacks game, cheering for the Suns’ Gorilla during a halftime performance, or anticipating the next desert tour date for your favorite band, Chase Field and U.S. Airways Center (USAC) are popular destinations for sports and entertainment fans in downtown Phoenix. And while it is important for the primary tenants -- the D-backs and Suns -- to provide a quality product for the entire crowd, both are at the forefront of ensuring that fans with disabilities have equal opportunity to enjoy the experience of visiting the stadiums.

Prior to the Americans with Disabilities Act, which was passed in July 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 outlawed discrimination against people with disabilities in certain respects. Section 504, however, only applied to facilities that received federal financial assistance, according to a DOJ spokesperson. Thus, the ADA greatly increased protection for people with disabilities in areas like access to transportation and public buildings, such as stadiums. But even today, only one percent of overall seating needs to be wheelchair accessible in order to comply with the law. And at venues with over 300 seats -- Chase Field has a capacity of 48,519 and USAC can hold 18,422 -- wheelchair seating must be available in more than one seating section.

Both organizations recognize that beyond minimum standards, there are many other ways to foster an inclusive and welcoming space for guests with varying abilities. One of the key...
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Both organizations recognize that beyond minimum standards, there are many other ways to foster an inclusive and welcoming space for guests with varying abilities. One of the key people helping to achieve this is Nanette Bowles-Odell, Ed.D.

Nanette Odell serves as ADA Coordinator/Disability Services Manager for both locations. Despite working in the disability services field for what she jokes has been "kind of my whole life," landing in the sports world was simply coincidental.

“I think God has a sense of humor,” she told me with a laugh.

Before being hired in her current position, Odell had her own business providing disability awareness training and consulting. Prior to that, she was the Disability Advocate with the City of Surprise. She admits that working in sports -- even after three and a half years -- has not turned her into an aficionado.

During her interview for this position, Nanette recalls explaining, “Please know that I’m here not because I can’t wait to see the players. I’m here because I want the people who are really into sports, and who happen to have disabilities, to have absolutely full and equal access to that, the way everyone else does.”

Given the nature of her work, a deep sports knowledge is not actually necessary.

“Some people might think, ‘how is she going to do this? She really doesn’t know anything about...”

Photo by Jim Todd
sports,” Odell said in a phone interview. “But my job isn’t to know anything about sports. My job is to know the ADA, and I do.”

Odell explained that because USAC was built before the law went into effect, more modifications to seating areas and other amenities were required there than at Chase Field, which was constructed with ADA regulations in mind.

At USAC, “we’ve added accessible seating to try to make sure that we at least meet the minimum required,” Odell said. “In some cases, we have [constructed] platforms to make sure that the accessible seats are raised up so that there is a better line of sight.”

Eight of their accessible seating sections allow fans to keep their mobility devices with them during events. Guests requesting a sign language interpreter for a concert or show are seated above the platform, with the interpreter occupying a corner of the section’s lower half so there is a good line of sight.

Odell works with community partners, like Valley Center of the Deaf and Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, to inform the larger community about an upcoming event for which there will be interpreters present. Because special arrangements need to be made to reserve the seating in these areas, guests needing an interpreter are encouraged to contact Nanette as soon as possible. As soon as there is a request for interpreters, we take the opportunity to market it as an “interpreted show” and set aside seats in the area with a good view of the interpreters. This January, for example, Disney on Ice will present eleven performances of “Frozen” at USAC, four of which are already being promoted in this way.

The Suns are also utilizing current technology, offering a smartphone app for fans with hearing difficulties that provides closed captioning during games, while the Arizona Diamondbacks display these announcements on their giant video board. Robin Smith, Coordinator of Disabled Guest Services with the San Diego Padres, says his team offers a similar option for closed captioning of public address announcements via MLB’s “At the Ballpark” app.

“At our Guest Services centers, we have assisted listening devices. We also have iPod Touch units that offer the public address feed in text form,” Smith explained. Smith also indicated that in addition to more traditional ADA accommodations, the Padres provide courtesy shuttles for fans with disabilities from a variety of parking locations both before game time and after the last pitch.

Certain needs still might not be completely met by all of the available in-stadium accommodations in Phoenix. To that end, earlier this year, the Suns partnered with Valley-based nonprofit, PAL Experiences. A short narrated and captioned video walks people with autism and other similar challenges through what it’s like to go to the game, from entering the arena to the end of the night. A similar video is being planned with the D-backs.

Russ Amaral, the Vice President of Ballpark Operations at Chase Field, has worked with the Suns and Arizona Diamondbacks, and has held his position for 18 years. When USAC opened in 1992, he remembers the genesis of an ADA advisory committee for the Suns, which still exists today. It initially focused on things like “parking, ticketing, seating, concessions [and] restrooms,” and is comprised of people with and without disabilities.

“It was very important to each organization to ensure that our facilities would be open, welcoming, and accessible to all guests,” Amaral added.

Hiring Odell was a positive step in this direction as well.

“Nanette’s efforts have been tremendous for both organizations. We are very fortunate to have her with us, and I’m very excited to think of what we can continue to achieve in the years to come,” Amaral wrote.

Odell feels fortunate she’s been able to impart her knowledge about stadium and arena accessibility at the National ADA Symposium, International Association of Venue Management and for the MLB Summit. While her audience is not always comprised solely of pro sports personnel, she’s been honored to share ideas with people in similar positions with other MLB teams, such as Billy Langenstein of the Washington Nationals and Smith, of the Padres.

Langenstein, Director of Event Operations for the Nationals, explained the symbiotic partnership his team shares with their counterpart in Arizona.

“Our relationship with Nanette and the Arizona Diamondbacks is great,” Langenstein wrote in an email. “Throughout the season, including
On Sunday, June 7, the Arizona Diamondbacks hosted the fourth annual D-Backs Disability and Human Services Expo at Chase Field in Phoenix. Throughout the course of the day, the team welcomed over thirty exhibitors to the stadium. Among the organizations in attendance were Arizona Bridge to Independent Living, the Down Syndrome Network of Arizona, Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center and Arizona Disabled Sports.

Nanette Odell, ADA Coordinator/Disability Services Manager for the Arizona Diamondbacks and Suns, says this is one of the many ways that the organization shows support for the community of people with disabilities in the Valley.

“The exhibitors were here to provide resources and information, answer questions and increase overall awareness.”

In addition to the various companies and organizations represented, the D-backs’ game against the Mets also featured a few on-field appearances by guests with disabilities, including sixth grader Willow Herbold from the Phoenix Day School for the Deaf, who signed the National Anthem. Six-time gold-medal-winning Olympic swimmer Amy Van Dyken delivered the ceremonial first pitch. Van Dyken attended the University of Arizona for two years and was a member of the Wildcats swim team.

Van Dyken sustained a spinal cord injury after an ATV accident one year ago. She now serves as a broadcast analyst for Pac-12 Networks swimming coverage and started a foundation in her name, which works to provide resources and medical equipment to people with spinal cord injuries.

Former Arizona State Sun Devil baseball player, Cory Hahn, was also on hand during the event. Hahn, a standout high school player in California, chose to play at ASU in 2011 and sustained a spinal cord injury during an early-season game of his freshman year. Two years later, in June 2013, the Diamondbacks drafted him in the 34th round. He now serves as the team’s assistant to the Head of Scouting.

Chris Carr
Recent graduate of Arizona State University’s Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communications
Phoenix’s future as a world-class, 21st century city depends on a modern, connected public transportation system. Our needs now and in the future are addressed by the MovePHX initiative in support of Proposition 104, which is on the August ballot in the city of Phoenix.

However you move about the City of Phoenix, this plan will impact you. If you rely on private transportation, then over a third of this budget goes to improving the City streets you drive on. Intersections will be improved. As a person who uses a wheelchair for mobility, I’ve gotten my chair stuck more than once at the bottom of a curb trying to get over that hump of rolled asphalt that meets the concrete; smoother transitions are in this budget. Sidewalks and bike lanes will also be improved, repaired and expanded.

People who rely on a fixed route bus service, will see expanded service hours and routes, more express buses and funds for timely maintenance to ensure that the access ramps stay in good working order. The budget adds SHADE to our city bus stops! That in and of itself is enough to convince me to vote YES for this measure.

Light rail users will see expanded service lines into South and West Phoenix, increasing connectivity all over our city. It will connect Grand Canyon University and ASU West to the existing line that services ASU Downtown and the ASU Tempe campus.

Let’s not forget the backbone to many in our community: Dial-A-Ride. MovePHX will help protect this vital program from additional cuts to service in the City of Phoenix. Without the protection of the budget allotments in the MovePHX plan, we’re almost certainly looking at additional service reductions in the future.

Robust access to many transportation options allows people with disabilities to work, go to school, worship and socialize in a fully-integrated community with the maximum amount of spontaneity. This plan addresses the widest spectrum of users and their needs.

So, what will it cost us? Taxpayers will spend an additional .03%. That means a penny on a $3 dollar cup of coffee or an additional $30 on the...
purchase of a $10,000 used car. Food and certain high-ticket items will be exempt from the tax.

MovePHX is a broad, progressive plan that benefits all Phoenicians. For additional information, visit MovePHX.org, find @MovePHX on Twitter and MovePHX on Facebook and finally, Move_PHX on Instagram. If you sign up for MovePHX updates, you can hear from a wide cross-section of Phoenicians on their transportation needs and find opportunities to attend public events to learn more.

As for me? I’m looking forward to the day that, thanks to MovePHX, I can roll out my front door, push my wheelchair to the closest light rail stop without backtracking past areas without sidewalks and take light rail to the DEC and back home effortlessly.

Whatever your transit needs in our City, MovePHX has you covered!

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVE

“I’m from a small town in Western Massachusetts, but am currently living in Downtown Phoenix, my ‘home away from home’. I am a SpoFit volunteer and also use the facility to work out. I play wheelchair basketball, wheelchair tennis, and will be playing wheelchair lacrosse as well - all of which practice at SpoFit. The accessibility of the facility via convenient transportation is critical.

Adding a stop closer to the DEC and SpoFit would definitely benefit the community, both immediately and in the long term. Current users of the facility would have more convenient access, and other community members who are currently unable to access the facility would finally be able to travel to the DEC campus, where they can visit the fitness center and partake in multiple programs.

I’m an athlete and consider myself to be in decent shape – the fact that the “walk” from the light rail stop to SpoFit is testing for me leads me to believe that the lack of a more convenient stop could be completely discouraging others from visiting the DEC campus.

The minor, temporary inconvenience to the local community while the stop is constructed would be miniscule compared to the positive end result. A small raise in taxes would undoubtedly be worth the convenience and the increased accessibility that a new light rail stop would allow.”

~Brenna Bean, SpoFit athlete, volunteer and member
The longest stretch of uninterrupted light rail is 2.2 miles long, between the 44th St./Washington stop and the Priest/Washington light rail stop. The DEC Campus - including ABIL, the Sports & Fitness Center and 11 other disability services organizations - is located midway between these two stops.

A light rail stop closer to the DEC campus would not only benefit the employees that work at the Disability Empowerment Center, but would positively impact the thousands of people that visit the campus each month to access programs and services, as these statistics indicate:

- 165 employees from 12 disability services organizations call the DEC home;
- 5,000 members and spectators attend the Sports & Fitness Center, part of the DEC campus, each month; and
- Up to 1,000 people attend the DEC-sponsored Health & Wellness Fair each year, just one example of the many educational events and workshops provided on the DEC campus.

"ABIL strongly supports Proposition 104. Lower-income families, those without cars, seniors or individuals with disabilities rely on public transportation to get to work and job training programs, college, community services, healthcare, local businesses and places of worship.

A good multi-modal transportation system provides the opportunity for people with disabilities and seniors to live independently and be more self-sufficient."

Phil Pangrazio
ABIL President & CEO
Phoenix Residents...

YOUR VOTE COUNTS

PROP 104
For just a penny more on a three-dollar cup of coffee, we can build the transportation infrastructure we need.

AUGUST 25
CITY OF PHOENIX TRANSIT VOTE

More frequent buses
Improved streets
Expanded Ligh Rail with a stop near the DEC

Register to VOTE at movephx.org
I’m going to let you in on a secret. It’s an accessible trail right in our backyard that has some of the best views in the Valley, as well as a babbling stream (some days) and a reservoir that is a surprise to almost everyone. It’s the Crosscut Canal Trail - a trail known to very few people - and now you’ll be one of the few enjoying this little gem located only a few miles east of the Disability Empowerment Center.

I discovered Tempe’s Crosscut Canal Trail by accident as I explored some trails around Evelyn Hallman Park (formerly Canal Park). I was intrigued by a path I hadn’t noticed before, so I followed it. A half mile later, I was standing next to a reservoir I never knew existed watching ducks splash and enjoying a panoramic view of the Phoenix skyline. I also found great views of the Phoenix Zoo - spotted bighorn sheep on the butte - Hunt’s Tomb and Papago Park. What a great find this trail was!

The Crosscut Trail, opened in 2011, may be only two miles long, but what it lacks in length it makes up for in style and functionality. This short path links two other, larger, trail systems, Tempe Town Lake and the Scottsdale Grand Canal.

Residents of Scottsdale can now bike south along the canal and use the Crosscut Trail to reach Tempe Town Lake, Mill Avenue shops and even connect with the light rail. Hikers and bikers from Tempe can access Old Town Scottsdale through the scenic Papago Buttes.

The Crosscut Trail can be a bit tricky to find; it can be accessed from its south side near the northeast corner of Mill Avenue and Curry Road in Tempe. It can also be negotiated starting at Evelyn Hallman Park (1900 N. College Ave., Tempe). From the parking lot at Evelyn Hallman, head west and then follow the paved trail that branches south.

There is one significant hill to be negotiated, but the trail features concrete paving and some nifty wheelchair switchbacks near the reservoir. Be sure to pack water and sunscreen, as the desert provides very little shade. Now get out and enjoy the beautiful desert, and remember, it’s our secret!

Don Price
Early Intervention Coordinator
ABI

CROSSCUT CANAL TRAIL
Tempe / Scottsdale, AZ
I’m going to let you in on a secret. It’s an accessible trail right in our backyard that has some of the best views in the Valley, as well as a babbling stream (some days) and a reservoir that is a surprise to almost everyone. It’s the Crosscut Canal Trail - a trail known to very few people - and now you’ll be one of the few enjoying this little gem located only a few miles east of the Disability Empowerment Center.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Have you received assistance from ABIL or another Center for Independent Living this past year?

Please complete an important customer satisfaction survey. Enter to win a $20 Amazon gift card.

Survey ends August 1, 2015.

We want to hear from you!

If you are 65 or younger, currently living in a nursing home, and would like to know more about independent living options, ABIL can help.

Contact: Stacey Zimmerman | (602) 296-0534 | StaceyZ@abil.org

Complete an online survey www.azsilc.org/cil-survey

WANT OUT?

If you are 65 or younger, currently living in a nursing home, and would like to know more about independent living options, ABIL can help.

Contact: Stacey Zimmerman | (602) 296-0534 | StaceyZ@abil.org
The Desert Challenge Games began in Arizona in the early 1980s with a few local athletes from Tucson and Phoenix. Now the event has grown into a large, multi-sport event hosting hundreds of athletes from across the world. The 2015 Desert Challenge Games took place from May 13th-17th in the Phoenix Valley and included 300 athletes and over 70 coaches and guide runners. Individuals age 7 through adulthood with a physical or visual disability were invited to compete in the sports of archery, field, swimming and track, with the opportunity to qualify for national and international competitions coming up this summer. The 2015 event was one of nine events called the IPC Athletics Grand Prix and was the only Athletics Grand Prix event taking place in the United States.

“This event is unique in the fact that it hosts recreational, novice and elite athletes all at one venue,” stated the Event Director, Lane Gram. “The junior athletes are running on the same track as their mentors and idols.”

The host organization, Arizona Disabled Sports, was proud to sponsor 45 local athletes who practice with the weekly training program at Mesa High School. Sixteen of the local athletes have qualified to compete in the National Junior Disability Championships in New Jersey this July, and an additional nine athletes qualified to compete in the US Paralympic National Track & Field Championships in Minnesota in June. The Desert Challenge Games also welcomed 40 veterans with physical or visual disabilities from across the nation to compete in the track and field events.

Arizona State University’s Joe Selleh Track offered a mondo track surface and adequate field pits for several records to be set at the event. Despite a rain storm and delayed start to one of the sessions, the event submitted
3 IPC World records, 17 IPC Americas records, and 60 WASUSA Junior and Adult records for track and field. Additional venues included Papago Park Archery Range in Phoenix and Kino Aquatic Center in Mesa. An additional 12 Junior records were submitted to WASUSA for archery and swim. The competition was fierce and the athletes performed at the best of their ability.

“These athletes did not let the torrential rainfall affect their performance,” stated USATF official, Mike Pekar. “I work a lot of events at the collegiate and high school level, but this event is my favorite. These athletes train hard, work hard, and at the end of the race they congratulate one another. It is an amazing event to be a part of every year.”

Arizona Disabled Sports offers a weekly training program for track, field, archery and swimming during the spring season starting in January and ending with the Desert Challenge Games. Not an athlete...you can still join this event! The competition also requires nearly 200 volunteers from the community to support the event over five days.


Event Statistics

300 athletes
45 AZ, Heat athletes
13 countries
35 of the United States represented
4 Junior archery records
8 Junior swim records
60 WASUSA track and field records
17 Americas records
3 World records

Lane Gram
Executive Director
Arizona Disabled Sports
They say that the wind blows hardest at the top of the mountain. But after capturing back-to-back Division I rugby titles this season and last, there is no place where the Phoenix Heat wheelchair rugby team would rather find itself.

The season came to a close in April in Louisville, KY, as the Heat once again claimed the sport’s top spot. With a ten-point victory over Tucson, the Heat managed a 5-0 showing in Louisville, winning each of its contests by an average of just over 17 points.

Joe Delagrave, co-captain for the Heat and USQRA’s Division I Player of the Year, was named to the All Tournament team as the best 2.0 player. Scott Hogsett was named best at the 1.0 classification, and Jim Roberts took the distinction of the tournament’s Most Valuable Player in Division I.

Delagrave explained that the competition was even more challenging throughout the club season this year. “Pretty much every Division I team had [an international player]. Every team was bulked up and ready to compete with us,” he said. “You don’t really like to lose, but at the same time, I think losing really helped us reflect on what we can work on as a team.”

The consistency of the team’s roster has also contributed to Phoenix’s success. Roberts returned for his second season, and Delagrave, Hogsett, and Springer have been playing together for six years. With Joe Jackson and Ernie Chun in the mix, the team has remained relatively stable over recent years.

“The chemistry there is undeniable. From not having to talk to the other person [for a play to work on the court], or knowing what they’re thinking, that helps,” Delagrave said.

Congratulations to HEAT Players Selected to USA National Wheelchair Rugby Team

Joe Delagrave
USA Team member since 2009

Ernie Chun
USA Team member since 2013
Multiple Paralympic athletes filled the Heat’s roster this past season, and the Most Valuable Player in Division I – Jim Roberts – finished his second season as a 3.0 player, helping the team capture the national championship once again. Roberts has played wheelchair rugby since 2011. Prior to his adaptive sports career, Roberts competed for his university’s union rugby team in his native England. In 2007, at age 19, he contracted meningitis and is now a double leg amputee. As a result of this, and what Roberts described as “some limitations in my hands”, he was classified as a 3.0 -- one of the top-level wheelchair rugby players for Phoenix, in terms of classification.

This past year, Jim competed for Phoenix during its club season, wore the colors of his home country with the British National squad (Team GB) and worked with the London Wheelchair Rugby Club. Roberts decided to test his skills against competition in the United States and landed in Phoenix a couple of years ago with the help of Heat team captain Scott Hogsett and rugby veteran Joe Delagrave.

“Coming to Phoenix was a really good fit. There’s a massive depth of knowledge on the team, and they’ve obviously been very successful in their careers,” Roberts said.

When Roberts joined the team, he was considered a relative newcomer to the sport compared to others on the roster. “[Delagrave and Hogsett] took a gamble on me because I was a relatively unknown player at that time. It seems to have worked out really, for both of us I think,” Roberts said.

Hogsett said that Roberts was a beneficial addition to the squad, and that his dedication to the sport was impressive. “Jim is dedicated to learning, growing, and winning,” Hogsett said. One of the things he noticed “is that Jim really is using his head” in addition to his physical skills as a high-point player.

Full stories at www.SpoFit.org
The Days on the Lake program is celebrating its 19th year of adaptive water sports programming. The growth of this one-of-a-kind Arizona program has allowed it to go from Day on the Lake to Days on the Lake. Jo Crawford, Program Coordinator of the Barrow Connection, recognized a need to expand the program and initiated facilitating the program three times over the course of the summer. Days were held in May and June, with the final days scheduled for September 11th and 12th, 2015.

This program allows participants to improve their skills in a variety of adaptive water sports such as water skiing, jet skiing, kayaking and fishing. For those interested in a boat ride around Bartlett Lake, a double decker boat cruises multiple times a day during the event.

The effects of the Days on the Lake program don’t just stop at the lake when the participants leave. Barrow Connection completed a three-year study to explore a variety of areas, including perceived abilities and attitudes, after participants complete the Days on the Lake program. They found that 65-70% of the participants engage in a new activity. These activities included returning to work, school, volunteering and signing up for other recreation/sports classes. This is exciting news, as it continues to show the benefit of having access to adapted sports and recreation and the long-term effects it has on someone’s life.

“It makes me feel like I can do anything. It helps motivate me and find new interests. I just love Day on the Lake!”

~ Madelyn S. 
Barrow Connection is a program of Barrow Neurological Institute at St. Joseph’s Hospital and Medical Center.

With contributions from Jo Crawford, Barrow Connection; and Gus LaZear, ABIL.
Coming in September!
DAYS ON THE LAKE
Friday, Sept. 11th & Saturday, Sept. 12th | 8 AM - 3 PM

Bartlett Lake Marina in Carefree, Arizona
Fishing • Kayaking • Boating • Jet Skiing • Waterskiing
Open to all and saluting veterans this month!

Register
Resource Link | 1-877-602-4111 or
Barrow Connection | 602-406-6280
A health promotion and wellness workshop designed specifically for adults 18 and older with physical disabilities.

10-week series ~ 2-hour weekly meetings
Fridays, starting August 7th to October 16th
11:30am – 1:30pm at the DEC
Instructor: Leanne Murrillo, CTRS
602-296-0535 ~ leannem@abil.org
www.abil.org/livingwell

Advertise with LivAbility

Welcome to the first edition of LivAbility, a magazine for people with disabilities in Arizona. The free quarterly publication contains articles that promote an active, fulfilling lifestyle for every ability.

LivAbility currently mails to 2,600 individuals and an additional 2,500 copies are distributed at various locations, predominately in Maricopa County.

Recreation    Education
Arts & Entertainment
Sports    Employment

Schedule an Advertisement
Advertising@abil.org
The star-studded show successfully raised hundreds of millions of dollars by objectifying and parading persons with muscular dystrophy in front of TV cameras using the most outdated and negative disability stereotypes and clichés to pull on the purse strings of America. Often, MDA would present persons as objects to be pitied; they lived sad and tragic lives, never having a future or lives of their own. At the same time, they would hold out individuals as super heroes and models of inspiration that were unrealistic and paternalistic. This 21-hour pity fest was brought down not by shifting media trends but by our nation’s changed perceptions of disability brought on by 25 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

After President Bush signed the ADA on July 26, 1990, the civil rights law began to work its magic by prohibiting discrimination and guaranteeing that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities to participate in American life as anyone else. Casey Martin fought for the right to play professional golf with reasonable accommodations; George Lane battled for everyone’s right to physical access to the courts; and Jonathan Zimring and L.C., in Olmsted v. Georgia, demanded that persons with disabilities receive their services not in an institution but in the most integrated setting in the community. Each legal success chipped away at the negative perceptions the MDA telethon reinforced.

But it isn’t just the legal successes that should be focused on. Instead, it’s the individual accomplishments that persons with...
disabilities perform day in and day out living their lives just like everyone else. Today, when we discuss with the younger generation of persons with disabilities about their future, they speak with the same young American angst and optimism of choosing a college and an occupation, finding a life mate and raising a family. This all seems perfectly normal and natural. Such hopes would have been unheard of in 1966 when the first MDA telethon appeared on TV.

Today, our society expects that individuals with disabilities go to college, work (and receive at least a minimum wage) and socialize just like everyone else. Each legal, advocacy and individual accomplishment over the last 25 years were shooting tiny arrows into the heart of the MDA telethon beast. Indeed, MDA recognized this when in 2012 they changed the name from “Jerry Lewis MDA Labor Day Telethon” to “MDA Show of Strength” and went from 21 hours to just 3. The old stereotypes and clichés simply did not work any more and now it’s off the air for good.

There certainly have been and will be some more beasts to overcome to achieve the full integration and inclusion mandate of the ADA, but at least one big beast has been slain by the ADA. Happy 25th Birthday, Americans with Disabilities Act! We can only imagine what the next 25 years will bring!

Edward Myers
A 25-year veteran of disability law, published author, teacher and proud ABIL Board member
Through the generous support of the MaxInMotion Foundation, the Youth Adaptive Sports Clinics will be offered at the Sports and Fitness Center July - December 2015. This is the third year the clinics have introduced adaptive sports to local youth.

New in 2015, SpoFit is adding wheelchair tennis to the sports lineup of power soccer and wheelchair basketball. Tennis will begin indoors at the Sports and Fitness Center and graduate to the courts in November.

One Saturday of every month the clinics will be offered on the Sports and Fitness Center courts. Power soccer will be on one court, and the second court will offer wheelchair tennis or wheelchair basketball (rotating monthly). Sports will be coached by local sports teams and coaches.

In November, athletes participating in wheelchair tennis will also receive a sponsored registration to the Desert Open Wheelchair Camp and Tournament being held at Scottsdale Ranch Park. These athletes will have the chance to test their newly-learned skills on the court!

These clinics are available to youth and their families to participate either as new or experienced athletes. The Sports and Fitness Center has a range of sports wheelchairs for youth to use during the clinics. These clinics are fully sponsored for members and non-members by MaxInMotion®; coaching, equipment and lunch will be provided to those who register. Visit www.spofit.org for more information and to register for the clinics.

“We have great coaches for all three sports. Our kids will have fun while learning essential skills.”

~ Kelsey Brocken
Lead Recreation Therapist
ABIL IS HIRING

• Free Training
• CPR & First Aid Certification
• Job Placement
• Paid Vacation
• Health Coverage
• Retirement Plan
• Employee Recognition
• Advancement Opportunities

Arizona Bridge to Independent Living is hiring personal caregivers to work with our consumers. If you have a strong work ethic and a desire to help people and make a difference in their lives, we offer:

Apply at www.abil.org or call (602) 296-0502

Si, habla espanol!

PHOENIX | MESA | GLENDALE | TUCSON | COOLIDGE
The Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) has been a resource for people of all kinds who are interested in gaining further education both during and beyond high school in a myriad of different and interesting areas. Individuals with a disability who reside in the Phoenix metropolitan area often begin their educational journey at one of the ten colleges or two skill centers that comprise the entire district.

“**A disability need not limit one’s access to an education beyond high school.**”

Granted, the process to enroll as a college student and receive ADA accommodations in the postsecondary setting is different than that of grammar and secondary schools (Kindergarten - 12th grade), but keep in mind, it is well worth the effort to learn about resources available to you as a person with a disability.

MCCCD has been in existence over 50 years. Some colleges in the district, such as Phoenix College, have been around even longer. Assisting students with a disability has always been viewed as an opportunity rather than an obstacle within MCCCD. As such, accommodating the academic needs of students with a disability pre-dates the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and similar legislation since. MCCCD has developed a model of service that not only complies with disability law but addresses students’ needs in an effective and proactive way.

MCCCD is comprised of ten college campuses and two skill centers. Locations vary throughout Maricopa

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**Accessing EDUCATION**

Community Colleges offer Disability Resource Centers designed to keep students on track

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**Gene Heppard**

*Director of Disability Resources & Services and TRiO Programs*

*Phoenix College*
County and serve the greater Phoenix metropolitan area. Each location has a Disability Resources & Services (DRS) office to assist students with a disability. The purpose of the DRS office is three-fold. First, the DRS assists students with a disability with reasonable ADA accommodations. It is important to understand that each student’s accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis, so meeting regularly and often with the staff at the college you are interested in attending is encouraged. Second, the DRS is responsible for providing equal access to programs at the college as well as physical access on the college premises. Third, the DRS provides information about resources on the college campus and within the community at large.

It is important, as a person and student with a disability, to be proactive and informed about your own disability and how it will affect you in a college setting. Understanding your own strengths and weaknesses will help you when you are trying to schedule classes each semester. For example, if you are not a morning person, do not schedule a class at 7:00 AM on Monday and Wednesday. You need to make informed decisions regarding your ability to attend classes in order to succeed in college.

Funding in order to pay for tuition, textbooks, and supplies as well as other miscellaneous expenses is often an obstacle for many individuals. You should consider planning ahead and meeting with the Financial Aid office at the college where you intend to enroll. Another option is to visit the local public library where resources exist to assist you with getting started in college. The College Depot at the Burton Barr Library in Phoenix, Arizona, is a perfect example.

Many individuals interested in receiving financial assistance with paying for college begin by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid – better known as FAFSA. This application is published by the United States Federal Government and consists of three types of funding – grant, loans, and federal work study. Applications are accepted for the academic year beginning in January and it is required that the form be updated and submitted annually. Anyone interested in completing the FAFSA application can do so online at https://fafsa.ed.gov.

There are numerous grants and scholarships that you may be eligible for based on disability, ethnicity, degree interest, talents, or even hobbies. Many libraries have financial aid sections that have books and online resources for you to explore. Do yourself a favor and take the time to investigate all funding options available to you before enrolling in classes. Millions of dollars in scholarships go unclaimed every year simply because nobody applied for them. Do your research and it will mean the difference between graduating debt free or with a pile of loan debt!

Everyone’s educational journey is unique to them. MCCCD and the DRS offices located on each campus and skill center are there to assist you on your path to a degree or certificate. Planning ahead, knowing your own learning style, and working within your strengths are key to being successful in college, and ultimately in life. Education is that tool that can bring independence and security within reach.

The DRS can assist students with a disability by working together with the student and faculty on campus. Reasonable ADA accommodations may include, but or not specifically limited to, the following:

- Testing Accommodations (extra time, private room, alternate format, reader/scribe)
- Note-Taking Assistance
- Alternate Textbook Format (audio, digital, Braille)
- American Sign Language Interpreters
- Auxiliary Services (CCTV, FM System)
- Hardware & Software (JAWS, MAGIC, Dragon Naturally Speaking, Kurzweil)

The DRS does not provide the following:

- Personal attendant care
- Perform specialized testing to determine if you have a disability of any kind
- Adaptive technology for personal use off campus
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 
Pacific ADA Update Arizona Seminar

Celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the ADA!

Join us for the Pacific ADA Center for the 2015 ADA Update Seminar to be held in Phoenix, Arizona, August 31st - September 1st, 2015.

Limited space available – Register today!

Speakers include experts in the field of ADA and disability law.

The 2015 Pacific ADA Update Seminar will feature:

• ADA basics
• Stadium venue accessibility
• Arizona disability employment law
• Arizona accessibility law
• Accessible information technology
• Inclusion of disability in emergency preparedness and planning
• Service animals

See the full agenda & Register today! www.adapacific.org/phoenix_conference

$195 for the Phoenix Seminar fixed fee for one or two days.

Registration and payments must be received by August 14th, 2015. Any disability accommodations must be requested by August 14th also.
This is made possible through the donation of used manual wheelchairs (in any condition), which are refurbished to like-new condition and then distributed to over 30 countries. Joni and Friends’ teams of volunteers (including physical therapists, mechanics and occupational therapists) custom fit the wheelchair to meet the specific needs of each individual, giving them a Bible in their language and connecting them to a local church. The cost of restoring, shipping and distributing a wheelchair is only about $150, but the impact it makes in the lives of people affected by disability is priceless.

Two years ago, in Warsaw, Poland, we met little five-year-old Bartusz who was severely disabled by hydrocephalus. Because Bartusz could not hold up his head on his own, he had to be carried everywhere by his mother. His mother, overwhelmed with the daily struggles of caring for Bartusz, was physically exhausted and emotionally drained. Life changed that day for both Bartusz and his mother when Bartusz received a brand new pediatric wheelchair! No longer isolated, his mother is now able to safely take Bartusz to school and church.

If you have or know of someone who has a used manual wheelchair, please consider donating it to Joni and Friends to help change the lives of people like Bartusz and his mother. Chairs can be dropped off at our office in the Disability Empowerment Center, Monday-Friday, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm, or you can call our office at 602-275-2568 and we will gladly pick up your wheelchair. If you would like more information about Joni and Friends, please go to our website at: www.joniandfriends/arizona.
Twenty-five years after passage of the ADA, the unemployment rate among people with disabilities has not improved significantly. Yet more than 70% of people with disabilities have historically expressed a desire to work. What is the problem?

The ADA sought to prevent employment discrimination by: 1) prohibiting employers from asking about an applicant’s disability status; 2) ensuring that job descriptions are not written such that they tend to screen out applicants with disabilities; and 3) requiring employers to accommodate a person’s disability where it is reasonable to do so.

Perhaps the reason the unemployment rate has not improved is that discrimination against qualified applicants was not as big a problem as something else - the word “qualified.” Even the most educated, skilled, or experienced people with disabilities looking for work have something in common: a gap in work history. After acquiring a disability, it usually takes significant time to recover enough to return to work, which means that skills often deteriorate, or simply become outdated.

Unfortunately, it has not been easy to access or afford the training necessary to get back into the competitive work force. Further, a person who has worked 15-20 years is not likely interested in spending 2-4 years in college learning basic academic credentials before getting to the substantive training courses needed for a specific career. In many cases it is a matter of just updating existing skills in industries like information technology, health care, accounting, manufacturing, construction, etc. Or perhaps it might be learning about new technologies, such as solar energy or biosciences.

Finally, that problem is changing significantly. The trend toward adult continuing education, especially for people with disabilities who are long-term unemployed (more than six months), is opening opportunities for short-term, employer-relevant courses either online or in classrooms across the Valley. This results in marketable certification, and often includes tools that will help individuals pursue jobs, e.g. iPad, MS Office software, professional memberships, etc. To access the training and the necessary funding, individuals are required to register with the Phoenix or Maricopa Workforce Connection at www.phoenix.gov/econdev/workforce-connection or http://myhsd.maricopa.gov/Divisions/Workforce-Development.aspx.
EMPLOYER-RELEVANT COURSES ONLINE

**TTY Career College, Phoenix.** [www.ttycareercollege.edu](http://www.ttycareercollege.edu)

**Maricopa Corporate College, Phoenix and Scottsdale.** [www.mcorproed.com](http://www.mcorproed.com)

Go to [www.maricopa.kuder.com](http://www.maricopa.kuder.com) to access their online career planning system.

Both of these schools are very helpful and happy to discuss options with potential students. Many of the certification courses are offered online. They also have contacts at the Phoenix and Maricopa Workforce Connection locations to help with the process of getting approved for funding.

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**Susan Webb**  
*Vice President of Employment Services*  
*ABIL*
ABIL’s Personal Assistance Services (PAS) program has been providing nationally-recognized, quality in-home and community-based care to seniors and people with disabilities for 30 years. ABIL has an exceptional reputation in the community for being committed to proving consumers with peace of mind and individualized care by well-trained staff members who are caring, honest and reliable. Personal Assistance Services values the whole person and empowers people to live as independently as possible. Services include: Personal Care; Homemaking; Respite; and Companionship.

ABIL’s PAS program employs more than 2,200 personal care assistants (PCAs). Despite our being the largest provider of in-home care, ABIL maintains its “small town” approach while providing individualized and personal service.

The PAS program completes an initial home visit to ensure a complete understanding of a consumer’s needs and refers a PCA that has the skill, knowledge and ability to perform the duties. Consumers may choose to interview and select the PCA prior to him/her providing service to ensure they both feel comfortable with each other.

Personal Assistance Services recruits, screens, trains and employs personal care assistants who provide services to seniors or people with physical disabilities who are qualified through the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS) and have selected United Health Care Community Plan, Mercy Care Plan, or Bridgeway Health Solutions, as well as Native Americans who are qualified and receiving services through AHCCCS/ALTCS and the Native American Community Health Centers. ABIL also provides personal care assistance to persons with developmental disabilities through the Arizona Department

Photos by Loren Worthington
of Economic Security’s Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).

For consumers who are not receiving services through any of the above-listed agencies, ABIL’s PAS program offers them the ability to obtain a personal care assistant by paying for those services themselves. Because we are a consumer-driven organization, we strive to maintain a reasonable rate.

ABIL’s Personal Assistance Services program values our Personal Care Assistants by offering training at no charge, health coverage, paid vacation, a retirement plan, an exceptional wage, employee recognition, advancement opportunities, and the opportunity to work with a respected provider of personal care services. Apply at www.abil.org.

For more details, visit abil.org or call:

Maricopa County: 602-296-0502
Pinal County: 520-316-4305
Pima County: 520-561-8861

Providing in-home care is not just assisting an individual with a bath, preparing a meal or doing the laundry. It’s a professional bond between two people where respect, trust and friendship are developed.

I recently received a letter from one of our consumers, which I would like to share with you.

“Please accept this nomination for the Employee of the Month for our caregiver Teresa. Teresa works for me, an 82-year-old woman in a power wheelchair, and my son, who is disabled and blind from a massive brain trauma.

Teresa has worked for us for the past 8 years and will be loved, trusted and admired forever. We know God gave us Teresa to be a part of this family. I call her ‘MY DAUGHTER’.

Please award her the caregiver of the month for the many, many hours, months and years she has given Mike and I. We needed her and she has provided all our needs. She cares for us with LOVE.

God BLESS HER!” —Alice

I have managed the ABIL Personal Assistance Services program for over twenty-five years, and it’s been my commitment to never lose sight of why we provide this service.
On Wednesday, May 6th, the annual Tempe Mayor’s Diversity Awards marked its 27th year by recognizing individuals with disabilities, employers, educators and businesses who have demonstrated ability, advocacy, access or achievements within the Tempe community. ABIL’s own Terri Guy received the Valued Community Service Award. Terri is a Certified Work Incentive Consultant in the Benefits 2 Work program at Arizona Bridge to Independent Living (ABIL). For the past six years, Terri has helped facilitate return to work for over 800 consumers while herself living with and managing multiple disabilities.

Terri helps Social Security beneficiaries with disabilities understand how their cash and medical benefits will be affected by employment and learn how work incentives can help them in the transition back to work. Terri supports individual beneficiary’s transition to employment, and most importantly, is a role model for those she helps.

Those that know Terri also know that she is not comfortable with recognition or the spotlight, and Terri was quick to acknowledge that this award was not just about her. She explains, “It is about the people who trust me enough to come to me, work with me. People know that I care. I believe in what we do. I know it, I understand it, and I’ve lived it.”

Terri is passionate about helping Social Security beneficiaries use the work incentives because she has done it herself. A former Social Security Disability beneficiary, Terri first came to ABIL Employment Services through the SSA Ticket to Work program. She had been on disability benefits for five years after an exacerbation of her Multiple Sclerosis that had, for a while, totally incapacitated her. ABIL helped Terri secure a job as an eligibility worker at the Department of Economic Security (DES) in 2004, then later recruited her to work in its Social Security Work Incentive Planning and Assistance program. “We recruited Terri because she is a living example of someone who has benefited from the Ticket to Work program and worked her way off of Social Security benefits,” wrote Amina Kruck, ABIL’s VP of Advocacy, who nominated Terri for this community service award. “Terri is compassionate with the people she helps work their way to self-sufficiency because she understands from a personal perspective how overwhelming the complicated federal and state program rules can be.”

Terri truly feels blessed in both her personal and professional life, and is humbled by this honor. Terri and her husband Tim recently celebrated their 29th wedding anniversary, and the mention of his name brings a schoolgirl smile to her face. Terri is also a caregiver to her mother, who has Alzheimer’s; Terri was touched that her mother was present to witness the Mayor handing Terri the award. While the spotlight is not her forte, she hopes that her award helps exemplify the importance of helping people become self-sufficient, stating, “Sometimes we lose sight of just how important what we do is.”
Fernando Cruz, Advocate and ABIL’s long-time Reintegration Coordinator, passed away on April 23rd. Since 1998, he assisted individuals from nursing homes ages 18-65 years old to gain independent living in the community. Through the years, Fernando helped hundreds of people make the transition from nursing home to independent community living. Fernando's own personal experience living with a disability - including his own transition from nursing home to the community with the help of ABIL - made him an ideal person to coordinate this program.

Fernando Cruz was a proud member of the Tohono O’odham Nation. He served as Co-Chair of the American Indian Disability Summit committee, and coordinated the Emergency Preparedness Planning for People with Functional Needs in Tribal Communities program.

His full-of-life personality, humor, kindness, and assertive advocacy will live on in all of the people he empowered and touched.

Maria began her employment with ABIL in 1999 as a caregiver for her mother. In 2002, she was hired as the Mesa Program Aide/Receptionist, and in 2003, Maria was promoted to a PAS Supervisor, where she coordinated the in-home care for ABIL consumers and supervised her caregivers.

Maria was passionate about her job and loved ABIL for what it stood for. Being a supervisor came naturally to Maria; being a caregiver herself gave her the true understanding of what consumers need in order to continue to live at home and maintain their independence. She also understood the responsibilities and sometimes difficulties associated with being a caregiver.

ABIL, its consumers, and caregivers have lost a true advocate and friend.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY MADE FINANCIALLY ACCESSIBLE

Loans for Assistive Technology and Equipment Enhance Independent Living, Employment

JD

JD is a successful artist with a disability who was interested in expanding his pottery business. He creates high end, decorative and functional items such as bowls, vases, “faux” cacti, vessel sinks and lamp bases distinguished by a unique glazing process. As a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) client, he was able to obtain a substantial grant from VR’s Self Employment Review Committee, but was still lacking the money to purchase a larger kiln necessary to create bigger items.

He applied to the SEED Loan$ program, and after a careful review of his business plan, credit history and repayment potential, he received a low interest loan for almost $12,000 that allowed him to purchase the kiln. He is now producing larger works of art and he reports that the demand for his art work has increased.

With contributions from Amina Kruck, ABIL; and Jill Sherman Pleasant, Northern Arizona University.
AzTAP, the Arizona Technology Access Program, in partnership with Northern Arizona University Institute of Human Development, manages two financial loan programs: Arizona Loan$ for Assistive Technology; and SEED Loan$.

Arizona Loan$ for Assistive Technology (AzLAT) is a consumer driven, statewide alternative financing program offering affordable loans to persons with disabilities and older individuals with functional limitations who want to borrow money to purchase assistive technology devices. AzLAT is targeted to borrowers in low and to middle income brackets.

SEED Loan$, the other financial loan program managed by AzTAP, finances equipment purchases and/or assistive technology to support employment of a person with a disability, including loans to help individuals start or expand a small business, like JD.

Assistive technology can include:
- eating devices
- adaptive toys
- communication aids
- alternate computer access
- aids to assist with walking, dressing and other activities of daily living
- visual aids
- aids to augment hearing

People with disabilities may use assistive technology to:
- participate in everyday activities
- play and enjoy recreational activities
- become mobile
- communicate
- hear or see better
- learn easier
- use a computer
- become more independent at meal time

For more information about AzLAT and/or SEED Loan$, contact Martha Lewis at martha.lewis@nau.edu or 602.766.4670; (800)-477-9921; (602)-728-9536 (TTY).
ABIL recently interviewed Matt Neitzke, founder of All Terrain Freedom and creator of the new offroad chair, CCR.

**What gave you the idea to start developing the chair?**

Long before I ever thought of making the CCR, I thought it would be cool to make a tracked vehicle for myself. Once I realized a need for something like this (more than just a toy for myself) with all the troops we have coming back with various amputations, I did a lot of research to see what was out there. It was clear nobody was producing anything extreme in that area, so “All Terrain Freedom” was born.

**There are a few electric tank-style chairs out there, what makes the CCR by All Terrain Freedom different?**

I have a passion for the form and the function, and when others sit in the CCR and feel the comfort of the seat and the inviting ergonomics, you can see it in their faces. I didn’t want a unit that incorporated your daily chair either. To me, that defeats the “freedom” aspect of it. Personally, I am a gear-head.

I love the roar of an engine and the vibration of life when I turn the key. My desire for adventure won’t run out as soon as a battery pack would, so if I want to go further, I’ll just add more gas!

**What has been the biggest challenge in developing the chair?**

The balance of the unit, the controls, the safety, improving reliability and ease of maintenance have been some of the major development factors. Then there are the things that the end user never sees that need a lot of attention.
as well – like controlling the buildup of static electricity that is generated by the rotating tracks and tuning the NVH (Noise, Vibration & Harshness) that is created when just driving a vehicle - much like what the big car manufacturers go through.

**Talk tech...Tell us about the engine, the tracks and the hand controls. Not many hand controls have been implemented to throttle a gas engine and maneuver a “wheelchair”. Was it a challenge?**

We have been working with a giant in the hydraulics industry to develop an incredibly sophisticated system that is very easy to use. Our single joystick talks to an ECM (computer) that talks to the electronics built into the hydraulic pumps and they tell the wheel motors where to go. The engine RPM is usually controlled by a completely separate lever (dependent on disability) and used when you might want more speed or torque to climb something steep.

- **Speed:** 7mph idle to 12mph full throttle
- **Engine:** Kawasaki 750cc fuel injected, water-cooled unit
- **Tracks:** 15” wide with 3” of travel in the fully independent suspension
- **Terrain:** Made for deep snow, mud and sand, but rubber tracks also function on concrete
- **Safety:** 5-point harness and overhead cage (which also looks cool!)
- **Options:** Lights, removable top, seat heater, adjustable lumbar, and bolt-on accessories such as cup holders and gun racks
- **Price:** Introductory base price is $17,950

**Did you borrow tech ideas from any other industries?**

I have been in the racing industry since ’97, mainly working as a mechanic/fabricator for all sorts of sanctions like SCCA, APBA, NHRA, SKUSA, AMA and others all over the US, Canada and Japan. I have been very fortunate to have worked for the best in the business when it comes to custom bike fabrication, race car engineering, aftermarket design and similar industries. Making things stronger, lighter, and faster is what I live for, and knowing the different forms of motorsport and taking a few ideas from each has been a big help. But it’s not always new tech that advances you; breaking lots of parts along the way is the only way to truly learn limitations and get better at design and function.

**Who would you like to see using the chair?**

Everybody! The CCR of course was intended for people with disabilities, but with or without, it is a heck of a lot of fun. I think this could be the start of a whole new genre in motorsports as well. The basic utility of a PVT (Personal Tracked Vehicle) is quite impressive, and with very little modification, the CCR could have a major impact on the military, snow removal, mining and many other industries.

**What’s the next step? How do you plan to get the chairs manufactured?**

Big picture, I would love to work with a large factory/manufacturer to get the CCR mass produced. There are many people with disabilities who would benefit from our CCR, and the scalability into the other industries would require much more than my shop can produce.

**Learn more about the All Terrain Freedom CCR**

(480) 510-4383  allterrainfreedom.com
July 2015 Event Calendar

Wednesday-Friday, July 1-3rd  
**Native American Basketball Invitational (NABI)**
8AM start everyday, all day  
Sports and Fitness members no charge  
**Brielle Carter** 602-626-7250 briellec@abil.org

Saturday, July 11  
**Special Needs Project: Advocacy & Education**
10AM - 12:00PM  |  DEC Classroom A  
Special Needs Trusts, Wills, Guardianship and more  
**David Carey** (602) 443-0723  |  DavidC@abil.org

July 11  
**Max in Motion / Power Soccer / W/C Basketball**
9AM-2PM  |  Register at spofit.org  
**Kelsey Bocken** 602-606-2757 kelseyb@abil.org

Thursday, July 2  
**Ice Cream Social**
10:30AM - 1:30PM  |  Cost: None  
DEC Classroom B  
**Leanne Murrillo** (602) 296-0535

Tuesday, July 7  
**Job Fair/Workshop for Job Seekers**
9AM - 5PM  |  DEC Conference Center, Classrooms A, B & Boardroom  |  RSVP  |  Be prepared to meet employers.  
**Amina Kruck** (602) 443-0722  |  AminaK@abil.org

Saturday, July 11  
**Roller Derby**
6PM  |  Sports and Fitness Center  
members no charge; other $12.00 at door  
Contact **Brielle Carter** 602-626-7250 briellec@abil.org

July 11-16  
**Camp Champ**
For information and to register, contact Katie Ritter, 602-386-4568 | katierr@abil.org

Tuesday, July 14  
**ADA Conference**
9AM - 4PM  |  DEC Conference Center  
Resources to help you advocate for yourself and others.

Thursday, July 9  
**Cooking Group**
10:30AM - 1:30PM  |  DEC Classroom B  
Cost: Consumers assist by bringing ingredients  
**Leanne Murrillo** (602) 296-0535

Wednesday, July 15  
**Medicare Counseling**
10AM - 2:00PM  |  DEC ABIL Room 2  
Assistance with Medicare/Medicaid related questions  
**David Carey** (602) 443-0723  |  DavidC@abil.org
Wednesday, July 15

Women’s SCI Discussion Group
5:30PM - 7PM | DEC Classroom B
Hosted by the Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association
Donna Powers  (602) 577-0517  |  TwoCats345@msn.com

Wednesday, July 15

Valley Metro & FREE Light Rail Ride
10AM - 12:00PM | DEC Classroom B
Overview of the Phoenix transit system
David Carey  (602) 443-0723  |  DavidC@abil.org

July 18th
6PM - 11PM

2015 ADA Gala CELEBRATION

Amy Van Dyken
Winner of six Olympic gold medals in swimming

“join me on July 18th at Tempe Mission Palms for the ADA 25th Anniversary Gala Celebration. Let’s truly make it a night to remember!”

www.abil.org/2015ADAGala

Thursday, July 16

Movie at ABIL
10:30AM - 1:30PM | DEC Conference Center
Cost: Bring a lunch or $5 for pizza
Leanne Murillo  (602) 296-0535

Thursday, July 16

Men’s Disability Group
5:30PM - 7PM | DEC Classroom B
Explore the impact disability has on your life and the perceptions of others. For adult men only!
Don Price  (602) 980-3232

Wednesday, July 18

AZ Lupus Warriors Support Group
11:30AM - 1PM | SpoFit Fitness Room, 2nd floor
Hosted by the Lupus Foundation of America
Toni Grimes  (601) 299-0592  |  AZLupusWarrior@gmail.com

Tuesday, July 21

ADA Teleconference
12AM - 1:30PM | DEC
In-house teleconference
Pam Larson  (602) 296-0536  |  PamL@abil.org

Saturday, July 25

Miracle Ball at SpoFit / Whiffle Ball
10AM | Register at spoFit.org
Sara Howser 602-386-4284  |  sarah@abil.org

Monday, July 27

Lively Limbs-East
6PM - 8PM | Healthsouth East Valley Rehab Hospital
Support for persons with amputations
5652 E. Baseline Rd., Mesa.
Lise Lindsay, C.P.  (480) 620-7125  |  LivelyLimbs@gmail.com
Empowering People with Disabilities for Over 30 Years

Programs & Services:
- Advocacy
- Information & Referral
- Peer Support/Mentoring
- Independent Living Skills
- Employment Services
- Home Modifications
- Personal Assistance Services
- Sports, Fitness & Recreation

Arizona Bridge to Independent Living
5025 E. Washington St., Ste. 200
Phoenix, AZ 85034
602-256-2245  www.abil.org

ABIL owns and operates the Disability Empowerment Center and ABIL Sports & Fitness Center

Thank you for not wearing or using scented products like cologne, perfume or lotions when you visit the DEC, ABIL or SpoFit.