

E-LIFELINES – Spring, 2019

Welcome, Spring!



"Spring is Nature's way of saying 'Let's Party!'" ~ Robin Williams

Spring Awareness Months

The months of Spring (March, April, and May), are recognized as awareness months for many disabilities and causes that affect people with disabilities. Here are just a few:

March is the awareness month for: Brain Injury, Cerebral Palsy, Colorectal Cancer, Developmental Disabilities, Kidney health, Multiple Sclerosis, and Trisomy.

April is the awareness month for: Autism and Parkinson's Disease. It's also Deaf History Month (Mar 13-Apr 15), Celebrate Diversity Month, and National Fair Housing Month.

May is the awareness month for: Allergy/asthma, Arthritis, Borderline Personality Disorders, Brain Tumor & Cancer, Cystic Fibrosis, Fibromyalgia, Healthy Vision, Huntington's Disease, Lyme Disease, Mental Health, and Stroke.

Upcoming Events

MARCH:

Friday 3/22 – Connect Mobility Fare increase proposal meeting – see page 5

APRIL:

4/4 – Low vision Support Group @ Westminster Village, Bloomington 1:30-2:30. – page 10

4/5 – Personal Assistant Orientation: contact Vicky for more information Vicky@lifecil.org

4/10 – Youth Peer group – See page 9

4/11 – Adult Peer group – See page 9

4/13 – Wheelchair Basketball Game – See pages 2-3

Begins 4/16 – CAT Class (Community Advocacy Training) – See page 4

4/30 – PONTIAC Personal Assistant Orientation: contact Vicky for more information

MAY:

5/2: Low Vision Fair @ Westminster Village – See page 10

5/8 – Youth Peer group – See page 9

5/9 – Adult Peer group – See page 9

5/16 – Personal Assistant Orientation: contact Vicky for more information Vicky@lifecil.org

5/28 – PONTIAC Personal Assistant Orientation: contact Vicky for more information

WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL 2019

It's that time of year again! Mark your calendars and plan to attend this year's Wheelchair Basketball event.

WHEN:

Saturday, April 13, 2019

TIME:

Doors open at 10 a.m., Game begins at 11 a.m.

WHERE:

Kingsley Junior High School, 303 Kingsley Street, Normal

WHAT:

Members of the University of Illinois (U of I) Wheelchair Basketball Teams will play an exciting exhibition game against members of the McLean County Unit 5 staff.

In addition to the game, there will be concessions with the help of the **Bloomington-Normal Jaycees**; a silent auction with the help of **Epsilon Sigma Alpha (ESA) Tau Tau Chapter**; a 50/50 raffle and a door prize. Face painting and balloons done by The Zoo Lady and her Zoo Crew.

COST:

Tickets are \$5 each, FREE admission for children ages 5 and under. Tickets will be on sale in advance at LIFE CIL's offices starting Monday, March 18. Tickets will also be sold at the door.

WHY:

Proceeds from this event benefit LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) AND provide two scholarships for the U of I Wheelchair Sports Camps this summer.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

- Attend our event – it is great fun for the whole family!
- Sign up to volunteer to prepare for or at the event
- Be an event sponsor
- Provide a monetary or in-kind donation for the silent auction or concessions

MORE INFORMATION:

To get involved or for more information, contact Brianne at 309-663-5433 or brianne@lifecil.org.



Saturday, April 13, 2019



Family Fun Day

**Kingsley Junior High School
303 Kingsley, Normal**

50/50 RAFFLE

**Doors open and activities begin at 10 a.m.
Game starts at 11 a.m.**



Tickets can be purchased in advance (starting March 18) at LIFE CIL. Tickets will also be sold at the door. Free admission for children ages 5 and under.

PROUD SPONSORS INCLUDE:



STRIEGEL KNOBLOCH & COMPANY, L.L.C.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS



AmeriCALL
COMMUNICATIONS



State Farm
Tom Brokaw, Agent

CEFCU
Not a bank. Better.™

DON OWEN TIRE



Face Painting and
Balloons by:



"Assisting persons with disabilities to achieve and maintain independent lives."

All proceeds from this event benefit LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) and provide two scholarships to the University of Illinois Youth Wheelchair Sports Camps.

For more information, contact Brianne at 309/663-5433 or brianne@lifecil.org or visit www.lifecil.org & like us at www.facebook.com/lifecil

Advocacy: Opportunities Abound!

Advocacy Alerts

Conan Calhoun, Disability Rights Advocate, is never bored. He is always working on numerous areas of advocacy, traveling to the state capital, or teaching others how to be strong advocates. There are simple ways you can get involved – it can be as easy as clicking a link and adding your information to show your support or opposition of a given bill that’s going to the House or Senate.

Let Conan know if you’d like to receive e-mails for Advocacy Alerts and he can send you information so you can sign up to receive them. You will never be sent information from these sources that you did not approve/request.

Contact Conan at conan@lifecil.org or 309-663-5433.

Community Advocacy Training

Learn how to positively affect change in your communities about the issues you care about.

- **WHO:** Persons with disabilities residing in McLean, Livingston, Ford, or DeWitt counties.
- **WHAT:** Program involves seven weekly classes at LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) in Bloomington, and two separate one-day trips to Springfield.
- **WHEN:** Tuesdays 2:00 – 3:45 pm, April 16th through May 28st. Classes will include sessions on affecting community change; meeting and communicating with a legislator; how to actively participate in the legislative process; advocacy, disability rights and the disability rights movement.
- **COST = FREE:** All transportation, trips, meals, and accommodations provided.

Anyone interested in this opportunity may call Conan at LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL): Voice/TTY: 309-663-5433 or 888-543-3245

Or email: conan@lifecil.org



Advocacy in the Works:

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON:

- Sidewalks: the city has a comprehensive plan (begun in fiscal year '17) that is scheduled to repair 38 miles of failing sidewalks in 10 years.
 - 13 miles have been repaired so far.
 - Primarily, ramps/curb cuts will be completed at the time of road resurfacing as well.
 - Funding for sidewalks in the City of Bloomington has increased significantly from \$100,000 (2012) to well over \$800,000 (2018-2019).

Please contact the City of Bloomington if you are within Bloomington City limits to have sidewalk repair noted in their system (Jim Karch-Director of Public Works-Phone 309-434-2385 or email at jkarch@cityblm.org). They can also provide you with a copy of the Sidewalk Master Plan if you want to see what is happening.

CONNECT TRANSIT:

- Gold Route has been rerouted to once again stop at Advocate Bromenn Hospital (corner of Franklin and West Virginia Ave.) to better serve people with disabilities
- Silver Route will begin serving Irvin Apartments on West Oakland
- Olive Route may be discontinued completely per a current proposal from Connect Transit. LIFE CIL is advocating to find a way to continue serving people with disabilities in the Orlando/Northbrook area. A final decision on this route has not yet been made.
- Fare Increase Proposal for Connect Transit would start July 1, 2019. The increase would start off at 25 cents July 1, 2019 making a one-way fare \$1.25. Additional increases may potentially be implemented over the next 4 years.
 - Customers approved for Connect Mobility can use fixed route service for free
 - Fare cap for fixed route service allowing those of low or fixed income the ability to purchase a monthly pass

CONNECT MOBILITY:

Connect Mobility riders will have increases too. Join us to learn about different fare proposals for Mobility Riders & give feedback to Transit officials.

When?

Friday, 3/22/2019 from 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Where?

LIFE CIL 2201 Eastland Dr, Suite 1, Bloomington, IL 61704

- Do you need Connect Mobility to stay CONNECTED to your work, friends, family, shopping, medical appointments, or other services?
- Do you live on a fixed/limited income?

If yes, YOU should come to this meeting and give your feedback!

Developmental Disability Awareness

March is Developmental Disabilities awareness month.



Over 5 million Americans are estimated to have a developmental disability.

According to the DD Act, the term developmental disability means a severe, chronic disability that occurs before an individual is 22 that is likely to continue indefinitely, and results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity:

- self-care
- receptive and expressive language
- learning
- mobility
- self-direction
- capacity for independent living
- economic self-sufficiency



These impairments require the individual to sustain lifelong or extended supports or assistance. Diagnosed conditions may include autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, or spina bifida.

<https://nacdd.org/learnmore/>

What is a Developmental Disability?

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) states that developmental disabilities are:

“a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas. These conditions begin during the developmental period, may impact day-to-day functioning, and usually last throughout a person's lifetime.”

Who is affected by DD?

Developmental disabilities occur among all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. Recent estimates in the United States show that about one in six, or about 15%, of children aged 3 through 17 years have one or more developmental disabilities, such as:

- [ADHD](#),
- [autism spectrum disorder](#),
- [cerebral palsy](#),
- [hearing loss](#),
- [intellectual disability](#)
- learning disability,
- [vision impairment](#),
- and other developmental delays.



National Center on Birth Defects
and Developmental Disabilities



<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/facts.html>.

Independent Living Skills Success: Emily

Emily first came to LIFE CIL in 2017 to meet with the Transportation Specialist. In that meeting, Emily heard about another of LIFE CIL's core services: Independent Living Skills Training. She was introduced to the Independent Living Advocate (ILA), and chose to start working with the ILA to become more independent.

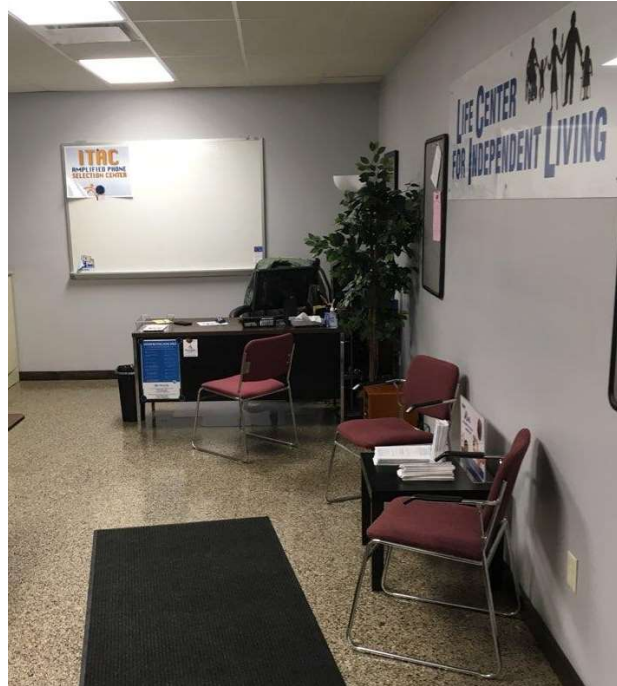
Emily worked with the ILA to determine what she hoped to achieve by working with LIFE CIL. Emily's ultimate goal was to acquire the Independent Living Skills she needed to get her own apartment and live on her own. Emily started her training with learning how to schedule her own ride reservations and gaining confidence in making those phone calls. That confidence has spread into other areas of her life. She has learned to accurately manage her medication by sorting and filling her own pill box (instead of relying on her parents). Emily has also become quite the chef. In 2018, Emily focused on learning about meal planning and how to research, modify and follow recipes. Emily is now cooking delicious, healthy meals on her own.



Independence at last! In November of 2018, Emily toured and leased her first apartment. Emily says she "definitely is more independent now" and is enjoying living in her own apartment. She says it's nice that her family is nearby if she needs anything, but that she is doing well living on her own. She still wants to learn more about budgeting her money and plans to keep working with LIFE CIL. When asked what she would tell someone thinking about contacting LIFE CIL, Emily said, "It's been a very good experience. It has given me more control of what I do in life."

Our New Pontiac Office is Open!

LIFE CIL recently moved to our new Pontiac location at **601 N. Ladd St, Pontiac, IL 61764**. We held an open house on **2/14/2019** in honor of American Heart Month and because we **LOVE** our new office! We have a larger, brighter space to continue providing all our services.



Come see us at 601 N. Ladd St, Pontiac, IL 61764.
Our hours and phone number are the same!
M-Th 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
815-844-1132



LIFE CIL hosts Peer Support Groups for Youth, Adults

Youth Peer Support Group – LIFE’S LEADERS

The Youth Peer Support Group meets at LIFE CIL on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Meet new people! Have fun! Gain confidence and leadership skills! Take charge of your life!

WHO: Individuals with disabilities ages 14 – 24 and you can bring one guest with you!

WHEN: Wednesday, April 10 and Wednesday May 8

TIME: 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL)
2201 Eastland Drive, Suite 1, Bloomington

RSVP: Call Meri Helbig at 309-663-5433 or email her at meri@lifecil.org no later than the day before the meeting to make sure we have enough food for everyone.



**When you RSVP, please let Meri know if you need any accommodations, such as sign language interpreter, foreign language interpreter, or alternative formats.*

Adult Peer Support Group

The Adult Peer Support Group meets at LIFE CIL on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 12:00-1:30 p.m.

Join us for a free lunch and stay to meet new people, have fun, get support, and gain confidence, leadership, and advocacy skills!

WHO: Adults with any disability

WHEN: Thursday, April 11 and Thursday May 9

TIME: 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL)
2201 Eastland Drive, Suite 1, Bloomington

RSVP: Call/Text Rob Ballantini at 309-750-5144 or 309-262-2138 *no later than the day before the meeting* to make sure there will be enough food for everyone*



**When you RSVP, please let Rob know if you need any accommodations, such as sign language interpreter, foreign language interpreter, or alternative formats.*

Low Vision Services for 55+ with Severe Vision Loss

Low-Vision Support Groups

BLOOMINGTON: LIFE CIL's Vision Access Advocate, Kim Tarkowski, travels to Westminster Village each month for a low vision support group. This group is open to anyone in the community aged 55+ with severe vision loss. Join us to learn about eye health, types of vision loss, and how Kim's program can provide FREE low-vision aids to help you keep your independence. Meetings are the first Thursday of each month. Please contact Kim with any questions: kim@lifecil.org.

Upcoming meetings: Thursday April 4th, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Thursday May 4th, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

CLINTON: Kim also travels to Clinton the 3rd Monday of each month for a monthly Low Vision Support group at the DeWitt County Friendship Center. Please contact Kim for upcoming dates! kim@lifecil.org.

Upcoming meetings: Monday April 1st, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Monday May 6th, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Low Vision Fair:

What: Low Vision Fair to introduce people with visual impairments to different types of assistive devices that help with independence. Area vendors will be present to give presentations and speak one-on-one with people interested in their products. There will also be Door Prizes!

When: May 2, 2019 from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Where: Westminster Village, 2025 E Lincoln Ave. Bloomington, Illinois

RSVP: A light lunch is available for those that RSVP to Kim at kim@lifecil.org or by calling 309-663-5433 by April 25, 2019.

Note: Low vision fair is open to all people with vision loss, regardless of age.