



e - LIFElines

FALL, 2018

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Phone: 309-663-5433

REMEMBERING ANN FORD

LIFE CIL and the Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living (INCIL) mourn the loss of Ann Ford, INCIL's founding Executive Director. *The following was written by Ryan Croke, Executive Director of INCIL.*

Ann secured a place in history as a trailblazing organizer for people with disabilities who spent her entire adult life fighting for civil rights, integration and inclusion. Her work to launch and lead the Illinois Network of CILs brought a stronger and more focused voice for the Independent Living movement to lawmakers. Ann never shied away from telling the truth about the impact of state or federal policies on Illinois' disability community. She carried herself with a gentle demeanor undergirded by a tenacious commitment to justice, fairness and knowledge of the struggles faced by people with disabilities worldwide.

Ann had credibility in the corridors of power because she was honest, direct and steeped in personal and professional experience with the Independent Living philosophy. She fought against harsh changes to rules impacting home caregivers, worked successfully to expand programs to help transition adults from State Operated Developmental Centers, institutions and nursing homes back to the community, and oversaw a statewide drive to bring decent health insurance to people with disabilities.

Ann was also a beloved mother, sister, doting grandmother and great-grandmother, who left a legacy of respect for all people, public service and humanity. She received many awards for her advocacy, including most recently from the National Council on Independent Living in 2017. Ann was prominently featured in *Lives Worth Living*, a 2011 documentary on the history on the long battle for disability rights in America.

She will be missed but her life will be permanently celebrated by the Illinois Network of CILs, along with disability advocates across the country.



Photo above: Ann Ford

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LIFE CIL CELEBRATES “FATHER” OF THE ADA JUSTIN DART’S BIRTHDAY WITH SPIRIT NIGHT AT RED ROBIN

On August 28, 2018, LIFE CIL celebrated Justin Dart Jr. by holding a Spirit Night at Red Robin. Many people with and without disabilities came out in support of LIFE CIL, who received 20% of the evening’s profits to help continue our mission. The following is written by and reprinted with permission from Stephanie Woodward, from <http://cdrnys.org>.

Justin Dart, Jr., who is widely thought of as the “father” of the ADA, was born in 1930 to a wealthy, prominent family. Growing up, Justin was very misbehaved, attending seven high schools, but never graduating. In 1948 Justin contracted polio and was given three days to live. It was at this point in his life that Justin changed directions. Justin felt loved and was given affection by those around him and liked the feeling. In turn, he began to treat people with respect and love. Although polio turned Justin into a wheelchair user, it did not kill him. He went on to receive his bachelors and masters degrees, then began to work in business.

In Japan, Justin was the President of Tupperware Japan, where he hired women and people with disabilities to empower them. Justin was interested in more than money — he wanted to create social change. Soon, executives in the U.S. told Dart, according to Mouth Magazine, “to stop promoting women to executive positions [and to] stop his disability campaign.” Upon hearing these orders, Justin and his wife, Yoshiko, resigned.

In the early 1980’s, Dart was a member and eventually the chair of the Texas Governor’s committee for Persons with Disabilities. In 1981,



Photo at Right: Justin Dart Jr., the “Father” of the ADA.

President Reagan selected Dart to be the vice-chair of the National Council on Disability. At this time, Justin and Yoshiko began a national tour, stopping in every state to gather stories from individuals with disabilities. Their goal was to collect accounts of injustices and hardships that disabled people faced in order to create a piece of legislation that would finally address discrimination against people with disabilities in America.

After meeting with disabled people across the nation, Justin and Yoshiko brought the stories they collected back to Washington, D.C. and began working towards legislation that is now known as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Upon receiving the information collected, Senator Tom Harkin from Iowa worked with many other prominent leaders to author the ADA. Harkin refers to the ADA as **“an ‘emancipation proclamation’ for people with disabilities.”** (source: McCrone).

Senator Harkin worked very hard to pass the ADA and, **on July 26, 1990, George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act into law** on the White house lawn. With Justin Dart on the stage beside him, the last words Bush spoke before signing the document into law were, “let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down.”

LIFE CIL WELCOMES 2 NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Conan Calhoun, Disability Rights Advocate

Conan joined LIFE CIL in May, 2018 as our new Disability Rights Advocate.

His primary responsibilities include:

- Individual and systems advocacy including traveling to Springfield to meet with Legislators
- Teaching the Community Advocacy Training (CAT) class . The next CAT class will be offered in the Spring of 2019. More details will be released in early 2019, so be sure to check that issue of LIFE LINES if you're interested!
- Finally, Conan is working with Meri Helbig, Program Director, and other staff members on launching and teaching the new Fast Track Transition (FTT) program for Youth Transition.



Photo above: Conan Calhoun

Conan has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and his professional experience includes 10 years as a Teacher Therapist Assistant working with children with disabilities and providing life skills, social skills, educational programming, social/emotional supports and crisis intervention. Conan also has his Direct Service Child Welfare license and is a United States Navy Veteran.



Photo above: Bryn Westerhold

Bryn Westerhold Administrative Assistant

Bryn Joined LIFE CIL in August, 2018. She works closely with the Administrative Services Director assisting with administrative and daily functions. She also assists other staff by providing program support.

Bryn has a certificate in Travel & Tourism. Her professional Experience includes six years of records management and customer service, and four years as Secretary of Academic Affairs at Heartland Community College. Additionally, she works as a personal support worker for a person with disabilities.

Welcome, Bryn & Conan!

LIFE CIL MARCHES IN THIS YEAR'S LABOR DAY PARADE,
HELPS PEOPLE REGISTER TO VOTE

One in 4 Americans has a disability. This makes voting even more important. LIFE CIL is non-partisan and can help anyone get registered to vote. If you need assistance, please stop in or give us a call - **November 6** is the next election!
LIFE CIL: 309-663-5433



Photo Above: Meri Helbig and Rickielee Benecke march in the Labor Day parade.



Photo Above: LIFE CIL staff, family members & consumers pose for a photo in Miller Park after marching in the Labor Day parade.



Thank You!

A huge THANK YOU to all of you who came out to support us at our Spirit Night at Red Robin on Justin Dart's birthday (8/29/2018).

Stay tuned for future opportunities to help support LIFE CIL.

Advertisement

LIFE Center for Independent Living is always there with the assist.

But today, Health Alliance thanks all in attendance for getting the assist and helping LIFE CIL score. We also thank and congratulate LIFE CIL for all it does and for reaching its 10th anniversary of this wonderful event.

Health Alliance

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ADULT PEER GROUP TAKES OFF

One Wednesday each month, anywhere from 5 to 30 adults gather at LIFE CIL to share their ideas, give and receive support, and socialize. While the group meets at LIFE CIL, it is led by the group members and their two elected peer -leaders: Rob Ballantini and Jen Morsche. Since starting in Spring of 2018, the group has decided to start working on some local advocacy and accessibility issues. Through a series of meetings two main issues have emerged as the front runners in these members' minds:

- 1) Auditory Traffic signals to help make crossing busy streets safer and more accessible to people with visual impairments
- 2) Addressing accessibility issues in Downtown Bloomington including sidewalks and businesses.

During the August meeting, members split into groups to brainstorm on how best to approach these two issues.



Photo Above Left: 2 men and 1 woman discuss approaching downtown businesses about accessibility .

Photo Above Right: 2 men and 2 women discuss options for auditory traffic signals .

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All meetings are at LIFE CIL and are open to community members unless otherwise marked.

October: Disability Employment Awareness, Down Syndrome, and Spina Bifida Awareness Month!

Sunday 10/7-Saturday 10/13: Mental Illness Awareness Week

Wednesday 10/10 5:00-6:30p: LIFE's Leaders youth meeting

Friday 10/12: World Arthritis Day

Wednesday 10/17 11a: CEFT meeting; **12p:** Senior services Council

Wednesday 10/24 11a: Adult Peer Group meeting

Thursday 10/25 5p: LIFE CIL's Annual Meeting - Heartland Community College

Wednesday 10/31: Happy Halloween!

November: Alzheimer's, Diabetes, and COPD Awareness Month!

Tuesday 11/6: ELECTION DAY - VOTE!

Wednesday 11/7 5:00-6:30p: LIFE's Leaders youth meeting

Monday 11/12: LIFE CIL CLOSED in observance of Veteran's Day (11/11).

Tuesday 11/13 12p: Human Services Council Meeting

Wednesday 11/14 2p: Transportation Advisory Committee meeting

Wednesday 11/21 11a: CEFT meeting; **12p:** Senior services Council

Thursday & Friday 11/22-11/23: LIFE CIL is closed - Happy Thanksgiving!

December: National Human Rights Month

Saturday 12/1-Friday 12/7: Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Week

Sunday 12/2-Monday 12/10: Hanukkah

Monday 12/3-12/9: Clerc-Gallaudet week - Celebrate Deaf History!

Monday 12/3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Tuesday 12/11 12p: Human Services Council Meeting

Wednesday 12/12 2p: Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday 12/19 11a: CEFT meeting; **12p:** Senior services Council

Friday 12/21: LIFE CIL's last day open for 2018. WE WISH YOU A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON.

Monday 12/24: Christmas Eve

Tuesday 12/25: Christmas Day

Monday 12/31: New Year's Eve

Tuesday 1/1/2019: New Year's Day

Wednesday 1/2/2019: LIFE CIL reopens with regular business hours.

What? Low Vision Open House

When? 11/7 9:00a-2:30p

Where? Evenglow Lodge
215 E Washington St,
Pontiac, IL 61764

Who should come? People 55+ with vision loss due to an eye disease such as Glaucoma, Macular Degeneration, cataracts, etc... Residents of Evenglow and the surrounding communities are welcome.

Why? Receive **free** assistive devices such as magnifiers, talking, and large-print items to help you live more independently.

Questions? Please call Kim at 309-663-5433 or e-mail Kim@lifecil.org.

ADDITIONAL UPCOMING EVENTS

Personal Assistant Orientation Schedule:

NOTE: Orientations are by invitation. Anyone interested in being added to our Personal Assistant Referral list needs to complete an application beforehand. Once the application has been processed, Vicky Hogan will then contact you with an invitation to an orientation. **Questions? Contact Vicky Hogan at 309-663-5433 ext. 205**

10/19	9:00-2:00	Bloomington Office
10/23	10:00-3:00	Pontiac Office
11/13	10:00-3:00	Pontiac Office
11/16	9:00-2:00	Bloomington Office
12/11	10:00-3:00	Pontiac Office
12/21	9:00-2:00	Bloomington Office

Low Vision Support Group Schedule:

10/22	10:00-11:00	Clinton
11/01	1:30-2:30	Bloomington
11/19	10:00-11:00	Clinton
12/06	1:30-2:30	Bloomington
12/17	10:00-11:00	Clinton

Questions? Contact Kim Tarkowski, Vision Access Advocate at LIFE CIL: 309-663-5433

All community members are welcome at these Low Vision Support groups. You do not need to reside at Westminster Village or in Clinton to attend.

The **Clinton** group meets at the DeWitt County Friendship Center:
410 E Main St, Clinton, IL 61727

The **Bloomington** group meets at Westminster Village: 2025 E Lincoln St, Bloomington, IL 61701

HELP WANTED

LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) is seeking a dependable person with a valid driver's license, clean background, clean driving record and dependable vehicle with proof of valid auto insurance to provide transportation on a sporadic basis for our Vision Access Advocate within our four-county area (DeWitt, Ford, Livingston and McLean Counties). Must be able to lift up to 20 pounds to assist with bags and devices that will be transported and assist with completing paperwork. Person(s) hired for this position will be paid \$9.85/hour and \$0.545/mile. Contact Brianne at 309/663-5433 or via email:

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YOU ARE INVITED!



Trivia?
NIGHT?



Q: What is going on?

A: LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL)'s Annual Meeting, including Dinner and Trivia!

Pizza and salad from Avanti's will be served for dinner. A brief business meeting will be followed by a fun game of disability-related trivia.

Our game hosts will be former radio DJs "Screwball" and our very own Conan!

Q: When is this exciting event?

A: Thursday, October 25, 2018

Q: What time?

A: Reception and Dinner from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Business meeting starting at 6:00 p.m. with trivia immediately following

Q: Where will this be?

A: Heartland Community College

Community Commons Building
1500 West Raab Road
Normal, Illinois

Get fun photos taken in the photo booth with silly props for a donation to LIFE CIL

Q: Will there be prizes?

A: There will be a prize presented to the winning table – the table with the most points at the end of the trivia game.

There are also packages you can purchase raffle tickets to win. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Must be present to win.

Q: What do you need to do?

A: RSVP to reserve your spot by contacting Bryn at 309/663-5433 or via email: bryn@lifecil.org by 10/19

Let us know if you need any accommodations.

ASL interpreters and CART will be provided.

Dinner is provided at no cost to you. If you wish to make a contribution to this event, a suggested donation of \$15 for dinner would be graciously accepted.

OUR MISSION:

LIFE Center for Independent Living advances equality and integration of all persons with disabilities. To achieve this mission we:

- Promote local, state, and national advocacy
- Educate persons with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities
- Provide support services
- Raise community awareness about disability issues

In DeWitt, Ford, Livingston, and McLean Counties

5 CORE SERVICES

- 1) Advocacy
- 2) Information and Referral
- 3) Independent Living Skills
- 4) Peer Support and Mentoring
- 5) Transition

CONNECT WITH LIFE CIL! Visit us or call:

BLOOMINGTON:

2201 Eastland Dr., Suite 1
Bloomington, IL 61704
PHONE: 309-663-5433
FAX: 309-663-7024

PONTIAC:

320 W Madison St; Pontiac, IL 61764
PHONE: 815-844-1132

OR, Find us on [FACEBOOK](#)

**If you would like to stop
receiving our e-newsletter,
please e-mail
brianne@lifecil.org.**

LIFE CIL is a proud member of INCIL

