
E-LIFELINES SUMMER 2023



Dear Friends of LIFE,

33 years ago on July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law. This historic civil rights law protects the rights of people with disabilities.



Even as we celebrate this momentous day, we also realize that there is still much work to do. Barriers still exist that discriminate against people with disabilities and prevent them from enjoying equal rights and access to the community. Our incredible team has worked hard this past year to help eliminate those barriers.

Last fiscal year, LIFE CIL impacted the lives of 2,969 people. Here is just a sample of the services we provided:

- 4 people with disabilities regained their independence **and moved out of a nursing home** into their own home.
- 239 **seniors with visual disabilities received services and devices** needed to remain living independently in their own homes.
- 1,467 people were provided with **durable medical equipment** from our short-term equipment loan closet.
- 72 students with disabilities received **transition services** to assist them with life after high school.
- 255 people with disabilities received **peer support services**.
- 16 people with disabilities received **self-advocacy services**.
- **Information & referral** was provided to 1,552 people with disabilities, service providers, family members, media, and others.

We invite you to celebrate the 33rd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, and to learn more about LIFE CIL and the valuable services we provide that promote **Living Independence For Everyone** by visiting our website at <https://www.lifecil.org/>.

Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable summer!
Rickielee Benecke, Executive Director

July is Disability Pride Month!

What does “Disability Pride” mean to you?

About the Disability Pride Flag

Ann Magill, a writer with cerebral palsy, created the first disability pride flag in 2019. The flag had brightly colored zigzagging stripes over a black background. Magill explained in an interview on [The Accessible Stall](#) podcast:

“My first design idea was to make the stripes zigzag, to represent how disabled people have to maneuver around all the barriers we face. We have to go this way and then we have to go that way...And that’s how we move through the world.”

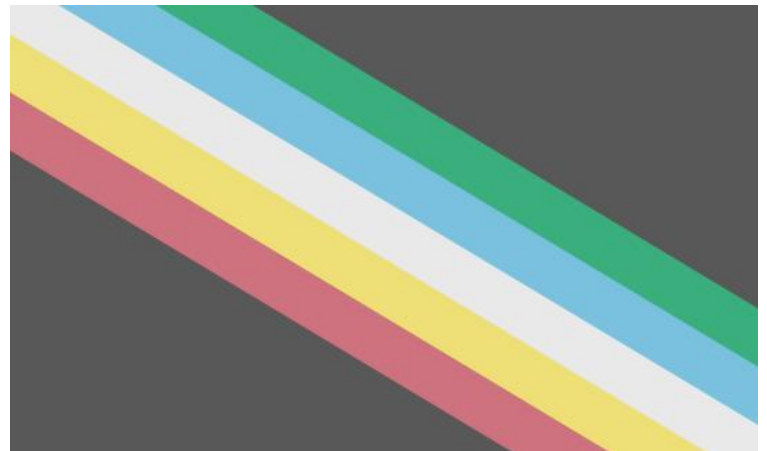
But when viewed on a phone or computer screen, the original design was causing symptoms for individuals with visually triggered disabilities, including seizure and migraine disorders. (You can see the original flag [here](#)).

Magill invited the disability community to help her fix the flag so that all could use and enjoy it.

Through many suggestions, the new disability pride flag was born in 2021 (shown at right).

In her interview with *The Accessible Stall*, Magill also shared what the colors on the disability flag represent:

- The **faded black background** represents "the anger and mourning over the eugenics and the neglect that disabled people have to fight against."
- **Red** represents physical disabilities.
- **Gold** is for neurodiversity.
- **White** represents invisible disabilities and disabilities that haven't yet been diagnosed.
- **Blue** stands for emotional and psychiatric disabilities, including mental illness, anxiety, and depression.
- **Green** is for sensory disabilities, including deafness, blindness, lack of smell, lack of taste, audio processing disorder, and all other sensory disabilities.



SOURCES: *The Accessible Stall* podcast episode 106 with guest, Ann Magill, [episode-106-The Accessible Stall Kyle and Emily speak with Ann Magill](#). [“Everything to Know About the Disability Pride Flag and Disability Pride Month”](#) by Jamie Ballard, sourced 7/19/2023.

What does disability pride mean to you?

Let us know on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/lifecil/>), or email your thoughts to shannon@lifecil.org with “disability pride” in the subject line. Any comments may be used in a future article or FB post. We will use your first initial only as the quote “source,” unless you give us permission to use your name.

Adult Peer Support Group

If you'd prefer to tell us what Disability Pride means to you in conversation with other people with disabilities, please join us for the next Adult Peer Support Group in person (hosted at LIFE CIL) or online (hybrid via Zoom).

Adults with all types of disabilities provide excellent support to one another in this peer-led group.

Meetings are usually held on alternating

Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Our August Schedule is a little thrown off due to the Center's annual planning meeting.

The August meeting on 8/10 will include a brief presentation from one of the peer group participants and LIFE CIL's Community Living Advocate, Vicky Hogan about your rights as a person who rents their home, and as a person with a disability.

If you, or someone you know rents housing in our community, this is VITAL information! Did you ever see in a housing ad or hear someone say “we don't take section 8?” **THAT** is source of income discrimination and is now illegal in Illinois. Learn what discrimination can look like, and what you can do to advocate for yourself and possibly, each other.

After the presentation, we will have a celebration of some great milestones for our group members.

...And, YES, there WILL be cake (Ice cream cake!).

Connect with Shannon to get added to the email list so you can stay in the know! shannon@lifecil.org



IEP Transition Plans: Preparing for life after High School

Teens with IEPs know, there is a LOT of conversation about what they are going to do “after high school,” and there’s good reason! Transition Planning takes a lot of time and is required to be in student IEPs by the time they turn 14 ½ years old.

The purpose of the Transition Plan is to help teens prepare to be independent young adults and figure out how to get there.

IEP transition planning should be more than just a hopeful exercise or brainstorming session. During planning, teens should be working towards specific goals in areas of community participation, educational options after High School, workplace training and life skills, just to name a few.

Sourced on 7/20/2023 from [understood.org](https://www.understood.org)

LIFE CIL is one of many community supports that are available to students with disabilities and their families, both during and after high school. Many schools in our 4-county region offer the STEP program when students are in their Junior and Senior years of High School.

But, did you know, there’s a program for students as young as 14? Through a contract with Division of Rehabilitation Services (an arm of the Illinois Department of Human Services) LIFE CIL provides a bridge between Junior high and the upper levels of High School. Seven area schools have invited LIFE CIL into their classrooms to start introducing students to the transition skills they need as early as possible (14+ years old).

Eligibility is based on age (students must be at least 14 years), have a proven disability (medical documentation, an IEP or 504 plan needs to be provided), and the student cannot be in STEP (if you’re unsure if the student is in STEP, ask you IEP case manager). There’s a form stating that yes, you want to receive services from LIFE CIL, and a basic intake form.

Our goal is to help students with IEPs start thinking about life after high school. The program includes:

- Job Exploration: Career interest inventories, look at different jobs that match a student’s interests
- Educational opportunities after high school: Do you need more education for the job you want?

(continued)

(Transition... continued)

- Self-Advocacy: how do you figure out what you need, and how do you ask for it/get it? Should you disclose your disability in a post-secondary education setting or a job? Do you have to?
- Workplace Readiness Training: What does an employer want from their worker? What is a resume, and how do I make one? Practice filling out job applications and role-playing to improve interviewing skills, and more!
- Work-Based Learning Experiences: These might include conversations with real hiring managers, virtual workplace tours, and more.

If a student isn't in these classes, or you're not sure if the program is at your student's school, please reach out! We can find out, or we can provide 1:1 or small group transition training "classes" outside of the school day. **Interested in getting involved in Youth Transition Services? We'd love to hear from you!** Call or email Shannon Tarkowski, Independent Living Advocate, at 309-663-5433 or shannon@lifecil.org.

In the past, we have hosted a Youth Peer Support group we call *LIFE's Leaders* and would love to restart that group. If you are a student with a disability who is looking to increase your leadership skills, general life skills, have fun, and meet new people, this group is a great opportunity!

An IMPACT Story: "I am finally happy to live again."

Several years ago, LIFE CIL's Community Reintegration Advocate (CRA) met with a person who was recently admitted to a nursing facility after a tragic medical event. At that time, unfortunately, the individual knew that, due to the severity of their medical conditions, they were unable to safely function in the community on their own.



(An Impact Story ... continued) In 2022, CRA was pleasantly surprised to receive a call from this individual, noting that they were more than ready to be out on their own again. They felt "trapped" in nursing home life and were "sick and tired of living life in a facility." A meeting was scheduled, and CRA provided them with a refresher on the program and discussed what assistance was needed and the process involved with their journey back home. CRA completed an intake, assisted with housing applications, transportation resources and provided guidance and support with locating necessary medical providers and supports in the community.

(continued)

Sign that reads "OUR homes, NOT Nursing Homes"

(An Impact story: I am finally happy... *(continued)*)

Several months later, housing became available. Unfortunately, this person had another medical event which resulted in a hospitalization and being placed in hospice. They were told they would not survive. During this time, CRA stayed in touch and connected with social service staff at the hospital and housing. After nearly a month-long stay at the hospital, this individual shocked everyone by making a full recovery. Safe, accessible, and affordable housing is in short supply so since they were not ready for housing at the time it was offered, the individual had to be placed at the bottom of the wait list and start all over again.

Since the individual had missed the housing window, they were admitted into a different nursing facility, and CRA continued to provide support with their transition back into the community. During this time, this individual progressed with physical therapy and was able to get connected with much needed medical support they had been missing for years. For months, this person continued with therapy, and built the support of their friends and family. CRA completed bi-weekly visits, assisted with necessary tasks, and witnessed this individual overcoming obstacles along the way, all while waiting patiently for housing. Before they knew it, housing was finally available, and this person was ready to get back into the community.

This past spring (2023), this individual received assistance with lease signing and shopping trips so they could choose their household items. CRA supported this individual as needed while they interviewed and hired personal assistants and coordinated DRS Home Services. CRA accompanied this individual on the day of discharge from the facility and continues to meet with them for weekly visits. This person has enjoyed getting settled in, and likes being able to do what they want when they want. This person notes how happy they are to be able to shower daily on their own schedule, use a clean bathroom not shared by three other people, watch TV shows of their choice, be able to have the lights and TV off at bedtime, and have privacy; all the little things in life that are often taken for granted.

They are grateful for the assistance and support that LIFE CIL has provided for the journey back home, and continued services now that they are back in the community.



"I am finally happy to live again. Honestly, I never thought that would happen. My mom said she can't remember the last time she saw me happy. It truly has been decades. But thanks to LIFE CIL, I am a happy person living life on my own."

Illinois passes the Home Modification Program Act

Problem: Many people with disabilities need small changes to their homes to make them more accessible

Solution: Establish a strong home modification program that allows people with disabilities, regardless of age, to make modifications to their home so they can remain there.

- Home modifications paired with other resources can allow individuals to remain in their homes at a **substantially lower overall expense** for the state.
- With a growing shortage of nurses and caregivers, home modifications can reduce the need for home support and reduce stress on the healthcare system.
- Who benefits?
 - 20–25% of all Illinois residents have a disability
 - 25–30% of Illinois veterans have a disability
 - 45–50% of people over 65 have a disability
 - Over 863,000 low-income Illinoisans pay more than half their income for housing: 17% are people with disabilities, 13% are seniors, and 3% are Veterans.
 - Illinois needs about 7 million more affordable housing units to meet the need.
 - Less than 5% of the affordable units that do exist are accessible for individuals with moderate mobility needs. In Chicago, less than 1% of units are accessible.
- Home mods keep people out of institutional settings.
 - 90% of people aged 65 and over want to stay in their own homes as they age and not go to a nursing home or assisted living facility.
 - Over 23 years ago, the United States Supreme Court held in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that unjustified segregation of persons with disabilities constitutes discrimination in violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - The national average monthly cost for a private nursing home room in 2020 was \$8,821 (\$105,852 annually).

(continued)

(Home mods, continued)

The newly passed Home Modification Program Act will allow:

- Illinois veterans, seniors, and others with disabilities to regain and maintain their freedom in their own homes and provide equal opportunity to live in the community.
- Huge cost savings for the state AND compliance with the Olmstead Act.
- Access to the expertise needed to effectively provide resources and or services for people with disabilities.
- Veterans with mobility disabilities connect with Centers for Independent Living for additional services and access to home mods not covered under VA.

Stay tuned for more information on this topic!

An IMPACT story: “You made a complicated move feel so much easier!”

Liz first contacted LIFE CIL in summer of 2022 as she was starting to plan a move to Illinois to be closer to her family. Liz had lived in Arizona for years and knew her way around the Human Services systems she used to maintain her independent lifestyle. When she connected with LIFE CIL’s Independent Living Advocate (ILA), Liz expressed that she’s a little worried about having everything lined up ahead of time for the move and said she’s “relieved to find someone who knows the Illinois system and can help” her.

Once she was in Illinois, Liz wanted to move quickly to get her Identification Card updated, as well as have her Medicaid and SNAP benefits transferred to Illinois, but she didn’t know all the steps to take. ILA assisted Liz with making a list of all the services she needed to arrange and with prioritizing them. ILA provided Information and Referral services for the consumer over the next few months. ILA helped Liz figure out which documents she needed to collect from the cities she had previously lived in so she could update her ID. ILA showed her how to access the online county clerks’ offices to order Marriage, Divorce, and birth certificates. Liz also received assistance in setting up her [ABE.Illinois.gov](https://www.abe.illinois.gov) portal for DHS benefits (SNAP, Health Insurance, Medicare Savings & TANF) and applying online.



Liz M.

In December 2022, Liz shared with ILA that Bloomington Housing Authority has a unit ready for her. The consumer asked if there were any programs for furniture? ILA assisted her with the referral to Recycling Furniture for Families, which outfitted Liz's new apartment end-to-end. ILA was able to use community resources to solicit volunteers to help Liz with moving the furniture into her new apartment. ILA also assisted Liz with navigating Medicaid's Medicare Savings Program (Medicaid may pay a person's Medicare premium), as well as connecting her with financial assistance for her heating costs through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

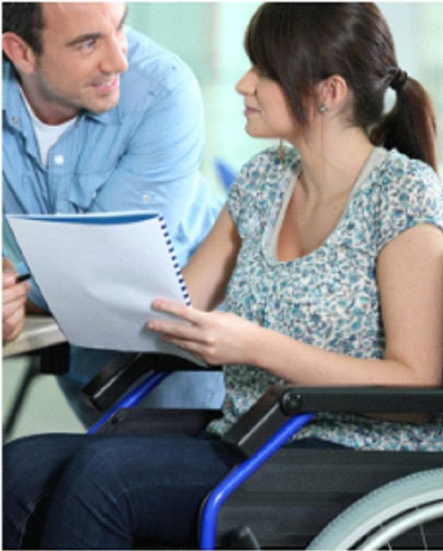
Liz has continued to touch base with ILA and is always noting how happy she is that she's found LIFE CIL and that ILA has made the whole process so much easier than she'd expected. Congratulations Liz, on the move and getting so much accomplished in under 1 year!

LIFE CIL provides information and referral services to anyone in our community in need of resources.

ILA was able to provide contact information for nearly every service Liz needed. Some of these included Housing lists, Recycling Furniture for Families, assisting with online searching and purchasing of personal documentation, and assistance with signing up for programs (LIHEAP, SNAP, Medicaid, Medicare Savings Plan), as well as peer support from individuals working at the center.

If you're not sure who to contact about an issue or need, just give us a call and we'll help find the right agency/person!

Personal Assistance at Home allows people to keep Living Independently!



LIFE CIL's Personal Assistant (PA) Program is designed to work hand in hand with the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Home Services Program (HSP). HSP provides assessments and qualifies people with disabilities to receive assistance in their homes, eliminating the need for nursing home placement.

How do I become a PA? If someone is interested in becoming a PA, they can complete an application with LIFE CIL. We process the applications and conduct the mandatory orientations. Once a PA has completed orientation, their name is placed on our PA Referral Lists.

How do I get hired? The PA Referral Lists are provided upon request. The consumer chooses who to contact, interview and ultimately hire. LIFE CIL does NOT employ PAs directly. Our PA Program can work with both the consumer and the PA, helping to resolve issues, create work schedules or whatever the need might be.

How much would I earn? PAs are currently paid \$17.25 an hour but will never be paid enough to compensate for the important service they are providing. The PA program is a non-medical program with activities of daily living being their focus in assisting consumers so that these individuals can remain living independently in the community. These activities can include assistance with bathing, grooming, meal preparation, laundry, and housework.

Where would I work? PAs choose the area they wish to work in and their availability. LIFE CIL maintains PA Referral Lists for the counties we serve: DeWitt, Ford, Livingston, and McLean. PA work could be a great second job or could provide full-time hours by serving one or more consumers.



(continued)

(Personal assistance... continued)

How do I get an application? LIFE CIL's Community Living Advocate, Vicky Hogan, is ready to answer any questions you may have and assist you in becoming a PA or with your need to hire a PA. You can find the PA application on our website:

<https://www.lifecil.org/personal-assistant-application/> or by calling our office at 309-663-5433, or by emailing Vicky at vicky@lifecil.org.

How many PAs are needed? We are **ALWAYS** in need of PAs on our referral lists. Without PAs, consumers would have to go into nursing homes, losing their freedom to live as they choose to live.

Please note: Applications must be submitted and processed before you can be invited to a mandatory orientation. **Upcoming orientation dates are August 17 and September 14,** (subject to change) or you can contact Vicky if you are not able to attend a prescheduled session. We look forward to hearing from you!



What is a PA, anyway?

A personal assistant, or PA, is an individual who assists a person with a disability in activities of daily living. Personal assistance refers to the type of service being provided, which is "personal." The personal assistant works under the direction of his or her employer – that is, the person with the disability – and may assist the person with personal care, meal preparation, shopping, errands, and light secretarial duties. Duties will depend on each person's functional abilities.

PAs allow individuals with disabilities to remain at home instead of being placed in a nursing home, other care facility, or an institution.

Ways to Support LIFE CIL

LIFE CIL has many fun and interactive ways you can help us to keep serving our communities:

ONEHOPE WINE

Now through August 1, ONEHOPE Winery is doing a fundraiser for LIFE CIL. ONEHOPE will give LIFE CIL 10% of all sales from this site: <https://www.onehopewine.com/event/148573>

Even family and friends from out of state can order and have wine delivered to their home, as long as their state allows it. All buyers must be of legal drinking age and provide a photo ID when the package is delivered. Please share this information far and wide!

A little information on ONEHOPE Wine:



Our founders saw firsthand just how much impact a bottle of wine can have. They began hosting wine tastings to raise money for important causes and encouraged and inspired others to do the same. Today, ONEHOPE is one of the largest direct-to-consumer wineries in the world and has proudly donated over \$8 million to local and global causes.

ONEHOPE's founders sitting in the bed of a parked white truck with the ONEHOPE building in the background of the photo.

QUARTER AUCTION



WHEN: Thursday, September 28

WHERE: Bloomington Moose Lodge 745 / WOTM Chapter 173
614 IAA Drive, in Bloomington

TIME: Starts at 6:30 p.m.; **Doors open at 5:30 p.m.** so get there early to get your paddles (\$1 each), purchase your 50/50 raffle tickets, and check out all the goodies available for you to bid on!

Bloomington Moose Lodge normally has a quarter auction on the fourth Thursday of each month. There will be quarter auctions each month leading up to the one in September that LIFE CIL will benefit from. Upcoming auctions: July 27, August 24, **September 28 – LIFE CIL will benefit.**

(continued)

(Quarter Auction continued)

Not sure what a quarter auction is? You are not alone!

Quarter Auctions are described as part raffle, part auction, and part fundraiser all rolled into one. It's a unique and fun way to support a cause while socializing and enjoying some friendly competition.

At the Bloomington Moose Lodge, paddles are \$1 each and there is no limit to how many paddles you can purchase. Many people opt to buy the "all-in" paddle, which usually costs \$22-26, depending on the total amount of items up for bid any given night.

The paddles are used to bid on auction items by holding them up when the item's number is called. All bids are between 1-4 quarters.



Each paddle has a corresponding numbered chip which is placed into a drawing basket for the item being auctioned.

A few minutes before the auction begins, guests have the option to purchase a second paddle for another donation. Once the auction begins, the host or one of the helpers will hold up the item that's up for bid and will reveal whether the item is a "one-quarter", "two-quarter", "three-quarter" or "four-quarter" bid.

To bid on the item, you will put 1-4 quarters (depending on what was announced) into the bucket *per paddle* that you wish to bid with. For example, if you want to bet on a "one-quarter" item, and you have two paddles and want to bid with both of them (doubles your chances of winning!), then you would put \$0.50 (\$0.25 per paddle) in the bucket and raise your paddles.

Once all the quarters have been collected, the bucket is passed around and shaken so that all the chips are mixed up. Then, one chip is drawn from the bucket, and the corresponding paddle number is called out. The person holding that paddle wins the auction item!

As you can see, not only is a quarter auction fundraiser a great way to raise money, but it's also a lot of fun! ***Please join us on September 28 at Bloomington Moose Lodge to benefit LIFE CIL.***

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RECEPTIONIST DUTIES

We are looking for multiple volunteers to help cover the front desk in our Bloomington office. Below are details about this position:

1. Answer phone.
2. Greet and direct visitors.
3. Assist with our Equipment Loan Program
 - a. Locate needed equipment from the equipment loan program.
 - b. Assist in completing necessary paperwork for equipment loan program and making changes on existing paperwork on file.

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(Volunteers Needed... continued)

4. Type and word process general correspondence, reports and other documents as requested. Proofread to assure accuracy.
5. Photocopy and compile materials as assigned.
6. Assemble, fold, and sort large mailings.
7. Maintain confidentiality of all consumer interactions and data.

VOLUNTEER DUTY SPECIFICATIONS (As needed for assigned duties)

1. Able to operate multi-line phone system, transfer calls, and record accurate telephone messages in clear English.
2. Able to proofread documents, collate multi-page and multi-document materials in the correct order, and alphabetize and file documents.
3. Able to operate standard office machines.
4. Must maintain confidentiality of all consumer interactions and data.
5. Must be able to work with moderate supervision.
6. Must have dependable attendance.
7. Must have own transportation to the Center.

If you are interested in volunteering to help the center out, please complete a volunteer application online (<https://www.lifecil.org/application-volunteer/>) or contact Brianne at 309-663-5433 or brianne@lifecil.org.

SAVE THE DATE: Our Annual Meeting is coming up!

Our Annual Meeting is coming up on Tuesday, October 24.

Our Board of Directors is working on the plans to have a hybrid option this year – in person or via Zoom. We hope you will be able to join us and hear about the work LIFE CIL does in assisting persons with disabilities to achieve and maintain independent lives.



Please watch your email if you are on our mailing list and our Facebook to learn more as the details come together. If you're not already connected with LIFE, please call the center, and ask to be added to our email list!

Equipment Loan comes to Pontiac!

We are excited to announce we have opened our Equipment Loan Program in our Pontiac office located at 601 N. Ladd St in the Pontiac Township Senior Community Center!

You can now visit our Pontiac office and check out durable medical equipment FREE of charge for 90 days (with the option of one renewal). Equipment is loaned out on a first-come, first-served basis. You are welcome to call ahead (815-844-1132) to see if we have what you need and reserve the equipment for pick-up.

The process is simple – complete a short form of contact information, including a second contact and you are good to go for 90 days! No script from your doctor, insurance information or deposit is needed. The equipment we have available includes walkers, wheelchairs, canes, crutches, shower seats and more. We loan the equipment on a short-term basis to assist individuals recovering from an injury or surgery; others want to try equipment before purchasing their own to make sure it works well for them. That is what our equipment loan program is for, and we are excited to be able to offer it again in our Livingston County office.

We would like to thank Pontiac Township for providing the space, and Evenglow, Salvation Army, and consumers for donating durable medical equipment which helped us get the program underway. We have received feedback from consumers and agencies alike that they are pleased we are now offering this service, making their dilemma of how to get to our Bloomington office to get equipment a non-issue!

EQUIPMENT LOAN IS (STILL) IN BLOOMINGTON

LIFE CIL loans durable medical equipment for a short-term loan (90 days). The loan does have the possibility of one 3-month renewal, if needed. All of our equipment is loaned on a first-come, first-served basis. We can only reserve equipment to be picked up on the same day.

If you need equipment, consider calling ahead to be sure we have the equipment you need. [While we no longer require appointments, it does save time and assures you we have what is needed if you call ahead and reserve to pick it up later in the day.](#)

Upcoming event: Pontiac Low Vision Open House

Are you 55 years or older with severe vision loss?

Severe vision loss means normal eyeglasses do not help and can include (but is not limited to) :

- Macular Degeneration
- Glaucoma
- Cataracts

LIFE Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) may be able to help! LIFE CIL is hosting a **LOW VISION OPEN HOUSE**

What: FREE assistive devices such as magnifiers, talking devices, large print items, and more!

When: Monday, August 7, 2023

Time: 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Where: LIFE CIL's Pontiac office
601 N Ladd Street, Pontiac

Questions? Contact Kim at 309-663-5433, or email kim@lifecil.org.

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Funding provided in whole or in part by the Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services. This content does not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services, nor is it an endorsement.

Low Vision Fair Brings Bright Outlook

In May of 2023, LIFE CIL's Vision Access Advocate, Kim Tarkowski, collaborated with **Westminster Village** to host a Low Vision Fair. Vendors from around the state demonstrated assistive technologies that people with low vision, legal blindness and blindness can use to help them be more self-sufficient and independent. LIFE CIL estimated 150 consumers were present and interacted with the vendors.

Consumers were encouraged to sign-in which gave them a chance to win door prizes donated by **Magnified Vision, Innovative Vision Products, and Mattingly Low Vision. MaxiAids** provided 100 catalogs and bags participants could use to keep information collected from the vendors.

Dr. Dietrich, of **Vision Point Eye Center** provided a very informative presentation about Macular Degeneration and the treatments for each form. Opticians from **1107 Optique** (located inside the Vision Point Eye Center building) provided free adjustments to consumer's eye wear including stem fitting, nose piece replacement, and tightening as needed.

Thank you to everyone who donated their time, space, and energy:

- **Westminster Village** provided the space for the Low Vision Fair and lunch for the vendors.
- Two volunteers from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (**R.S.V.P.**) helped at the sign in table.
- One Lion from the **Hudson Lions Club** also assisted at the sign in table, and later, called out the winners of the door prizes.
- Our Vendors donated their time and expertise and made this fair successful:
 - **Magnified Vision – Innovative Vision Products – The Mary Bryant Home –**
 - **JAWS Screen Reader software – Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) –**
 - **Connect Transit – 1107 Optique – National Federation of the Blind of Illinois –**

The responses from the participants and vendors alike were positive. One vendor couldn't wait! They sent Kim an email that same evening of the fair thanking her for organizing it and stating he'd be very happy to participate in another fair later on. Consumers visiting LIFE CIL's table were grateful, many repeating some form of "thank you for doing this for us, bringing the Low Vision fair." They also commented on how much they'd learned that day.

Some photos we captured from this event:



Kim Tarkowski, and Program Director, Meri Helbig, sit at LIFE CIL's vendor table at the Westminster Low Vision Fair.



Above: A man looks at the devices on a table in front of him as a woman explains devices and services offered by IATP.



Volunteers from RSVP are seated at the sign in table, ready to check attendees in at the Low Vision Fair.



Margarite Brooks stands by her computer. She demonstrated the JAWS Screen Reading Software for attendees.

LOCATIONS & HOURS

Bloomington

M-F 8:30 am – 5:00 pm
Phone: (309) 663-5433
2201 Eastland Drive, Suite 1
Bloomington, IL 61704
Fax: (309) 663-7024
Toll-Free: (888) 543-3245

Pontiac

M-Th 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Phone: (815) 844-1132
601 North Ladd Street
Pontiac, IL 61764

If a friend sent this newsletter to you and you'd like to be added to our email list, give us a call or email brianne@lifecil.org. We never sell or give away your information!

Learn about LIFE CIL, events, advocacy opportunities, & more at:

www.lifecil.org and <https://www.facebook.com/lifecil>.



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