

RAP Sheet

The Latest in Disability Research, Advocacy, Policy, and Practice

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HOME SWEET HOME



Opportunities for Affordable, Accessible, and Integrated Housing: Believing in the Possibilities and Creating the Opportunities

Jay Klein, Center for Housing & New Community Economics (CHANCE),
Institute on Disability, University of New Hampshire

Over the last few decades there has been a concerted effort to end America's affordable housing crisis. Thousands of new units of affordable housing have been developed for people who have low incomes; these include some units designed to be accessible. Although these endeavors should be applauded, affordable and accessible housing in itself does not address significant barriers still faced by millions of Americans.

Unfortunately, much of the new housing development in this country has excluded vast numbers of people who have disabilities. There remains an undeniable lack of integrated, affordable, accessible, and visitable housing from which people with disabilities may choose. Even when housing options are available, people are often not afforded control over, or given a voice in, the most basic decisions regarding where they live, with whom they live, and how they spend their time. Why? Despite creative names and shiny new exteriors, much of the new housing available to people with disabilities remains congregate, segregated, and service system controlled.

According to 1994-95 U.S. Census Bureau data, less than half (48%) of the estimated 53.9 million people with disabilities either own or rent their own homes. *The State of States in Developmental Disabilities: 2004 Summary*, reported 68.6% of adults with developmental disabilities lived in homes controlled by someone else. (Braddock, D., Hemp, R., Rizzolo, M., 2005) In comparison, virtually all adults without disabilities either own or rent their own homes.

In October of 2006 the US Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Alphonso Jackson, in a letter to all Public Housing Agencies wrote, "The Department

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Welcome to our Spring Issue. For most of us, home is the place where we take refuge from the world, the space where we express ourselves, and where we decide who to invite in. Too often, people with disabilities are not included in even the most basic decisions about where and with whom they live. In this issue we look at why everyone should have a place to call home.

SUSAN COVERT, EDITOR

A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BY THE

DISABILITIES RIGHTS CENTER, INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY, AND NH COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

(Cover story continued)

strongly supports expanding accessible, affordable, and integrated housing options to promote the transition of people with disabilities and seniors out of institutional settings and into the community." In order to assure people with disabilities are not further segregated from their communities, future housing development will need to be affordable, accessible, and integrated.

Why is it important for people to control their own homes, whether rented, leased, or mortgaged? From a community development perspective, as individuals with disabilities exercise choice and self-determination over decisions regarding their housing, they will engage in mutual and interdependent exchanges with other community members. Control of one's housing allows individuals with disabilities to be contributing community members *and* to participate in the networks of mutual exchange that define the essence of community.

In economic terms, recent studies have demonstrated that providing personal assistance services to individuals living in their own homes costs far less than supporting individuals to live in institutional settings. *The State of States in Developmental Disabilities: 2004 Summary* found that the 41,214 residents in state institutions for people with developmental disabilities accounted for a total annual expenditure of \$6.03 billion, an annual cost of \$146,309 per person. The Study further reported that for the same time period, personal assistance services for 44,062 people living in community settings accounted for a total annual expenditure of \$701,458,681 million, an annual cost of \$15,920 per person. (Braddock, D., Hemp, R., Rizzolo, M., 2005)

Because the majority of people with disabilities have limited financial resources with which to own or lease their own homes, it is necessary to identify and combine complex financial mechanisms in order to bridge the gap between their income and the real cost of housing. These mechanisms typically include a combination of low interest rate financing, government or private grants, or rental or homeownership subsidies.

Slowly, but surely, America is making strides to increase the number of people with disabilities who live in affordable, accessible, and integrated housing that they control. Throughout the country, there are a small but growing number of state and local efforts that draw upon a variety of federal, state, and local funding sources to increase housing opportunities for citizens with disabilities. Below are a few notable examples.

Iowa – The Housing Finance Agency uses resources from a state trust fund and local resources to provide rent subsidies for over 400 Medicaid waiver recipients who are waiting for Section 8 vouchers. Trust funds also are used to develop or rehabilitate housing units that are affordable, accessible, and integrated.

A Sense of Freedom

Barbara Howard, New Hampshire Community Loan Fund

Troy Lavigne, 33, has achieved one of his biggest dreams.

"I am now a homeowner," said a beaming Lavigne, who recently bought a three-bedroom condominium in Dover. "I can do what I want here. I have the freedom to do things that I want to do."

That freedom was achieved, in part, with assistance from the Home of Your Own Program (HOYO), which helps individuals with developmental disabilities like Lavigne secure permanent housing.



Troy Lavigne, HOYO participant, at his home in Dover.

This photo courtesy of the NH Community Loan Fund
Photographer: Geoff Forester

New Hampshire – The Community Loan Fund, a Community Development Finance Institution, has assisted over 75 people using HUD Section 8 Vouchers and funds from the USDA Rural Housing Development, Housing Finance Authority, the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, the Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Developmental Services, New Hampshire Association of Realtors, and local banks to help people buy homes.

Mississippi – The Institute on Disability Studies receives counseling funds and Section 8 vouchers from HUD as well as funds from the USDA Rural Housing Agency, State Development Authority, and Housing Finance Agency, to assist 20-30 people per year to purchase homes.

North Carolina – The Department of Health and Human Services facilitates the use of over 900 Low Income Tax Credits designated for people who have disabilities; a state rent subsidy financed by a state trust fund; and Housing Finance Agency dollars to assist people at the SSI level of income. Tax credits, Section 8 vouchers, Medicaid Waiver funds and referrals from the local boards of cross disability agencies all help to assure that people have their own homes.

Texas – The State United Cerebral Palsy organization became a housing developer to use HUD Section 811, state tax credits, and state housing finance funds. State tax credit dollars and city housing funds are accessed to develop, rehabilitate, and provide rent subsidies for new housing units.



Author Jay Klein is a national leader in the movement to make affordable, accessible, and integrated housing available to individuals with disabilities.

People with disabilities, their family members, and service providers are becoming more knowledgeable about the dynamics of developing housing and are making connections with financial institutions and housing providers. As a result, housing agencies and financial institutions are learning more about the funding mechanisms and service systems that support people with disabilities who have low incomes. These new partnerships have had and will continue to have a significant impact in changing policies to assure that people with disabilities have the opportunity to live in homes that are affordable, accessible, and integrated.

"HOYO allows people like Troy and their families to gain long-term control and stability over their lives by achieving the American Dream of homeownership," said Barbara Howard, Home of Your Own Specialist. HOYO is a Program at the non-profit New Hampshire Community Loan Fund.

"Troy is thrilled," said Randy Lavigne, Troy's father. "Every other word out of his mouth is, 'Dad, I'm so happy.'"

Prior to buying the Dover townhouse, Lavigne rented an apartment in Portsmouth. It was expensive and, according to Troy, restrictive. "When you rent,

you can't do the same things you can do when you own," he said. "You have to deal with a landlord."

After looking at over 30 properties on the Seacoast, he hit pay dirt. "When I walked in here, I knew I really liked it," he said. "It was like, bing, bing, bing! I could make it into a dance studio."

Lavigne's monthly house payment is substantially less than the \$1500 he once paid in rent. He's building equity and a sense of permanence. His father said, "I have piece of mind now that Troy bought a home."

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A Home of Her Own

Julia Freeman-Woolpert, Disabilities Rights Center

Six years ago Claire Shepardson bought a spacious home in Nashua. Her house has a back porch that looks over a winding brook and plenty of room for her sheltie Duke and a downstairs apartment for a live-in aide. The floor plan is open enough for Claire to maneuver her wheelchair with sip and puff controls, but cozy enough for friends to gather and chat in the kitchen nook. Photos of her large and close-knit family fill the mantel over her fireplace.

Claire's comfortable and welcoming home is the realization of a long time dream. In 1978, with her family unable to care for her and no resources for in home assistance, Claire was "temporarily" placed in Greenbriar nursing home. Claire remembered, "My mother and father were devastated when I had to go to the nursing home." In the beginning she had frequent visitors and went out often, but as the years passed Claire spent more and more time alone.

For 22 years Claire remained in Greenbriar. Even as the years turned into decades, Claire never stopped fighting to leave. "I kept saying it would be a whole lot cheaper for people to stay at home with people that could take care of them, people that loved them," she noted. It took a hearing for Claire to be found eligible for area agency services under the ABD (acquired brain disorder) waiver program. Shortly after being placed on the area agency waiting list, Claire became a named plaintiff in *Bryson v. Commissioner*, better known as the ABD waitlist lawsuit. Claire credited both the lawsuit and advocacy by the Area Agency for Developmental Services of Greater Nashua with the state approving her budget for services.

With an approved budget, the next step was planning. Leslie Boggis, the area agency's account manager, used a person-centered planning process with Claire to help her find a way out of the nursing home. They researched regulations, searched for creative options, and together dreamed about Claire's future. "She'd get out an easel and write things down," Claire remembered. "Leslie would ask, 'How do you view things being a year from now? Can you see yourself in an apartment? What if money were no object?' We started from there." Claire



Claire Shepardson at her home in Nashua.

knew she wanted the privacy of at least living in her own apartment, but didn't know if she dared hope for a house of her own.

With Leslie's encouragement, Claire decided to look into home ownership. Leslie scouted houses and she and Claire looked at the ones that showed promise. Finding a house that was affordable, met Claire's needs for accessibility, and had room for live-in assistance turned out to be a major challenge. Fortunately, Claire noted, "Leslie is tenacious, she does not give up. She's somebody you want on your side." Finally, they found a house in the right price range and, although less than ideal, Claire decided she could make it work. On the day she was to close, the area agency got a tip from the city that an accessible house was being foreclosed for back taxes. Claire and Leslie rushed over to take a look. It was perfect. Claire signed a sales agreement the next day.

It took some creative financing and piecing together several resources for Claire to be able to buy her home. With help from the Home of Your Own program, the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, and the Bank of New Hampshire Claire was able to make it work.

Finding staff was the next task. Fortunately, three Greenbriar staff members who had become friends with Claire decided to leave the nursing home to work for Claire. Six years later, two of these women are still with her. Claire is responsible for staff hiring and supervision and the area agency pays staff through Claire's individual budget.

With donated furniture from friends and family and help arranging for the technology she needed to support her independence, Claire was ready. On June 15, 2001, a date



Finally Home

Linda Bimbo, Institute on Disability

One hot August day in 2005 Cliff Marsh left the Merrimack County nursing home and moved into his own apartment in Concord. That first night Cliff didn't even go to bed. He fell asleep in his new recliner in the living room, watching the Red Sox on TV – because he could.

A New Freedom Initiative grant funded by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services made Cliff's transition from the nursing home back into the community possible. The grant provided selected New Hampshire nursing home residents with the resources and supports they needed to successfully return to the community.

For Cliff the process of leaving the nursing home began when he told the Transition Coordinator from Riverbend Community Mental Health, "Yes, I want to move out!" An initial challenge for the Transition Coordinator was to identify and access the community-based services that would be able to meet Cliff's complex medical and support needs. Cliff, who uses a wheelchair and is totally disabled, also required housing that was both accessible and affordable. It took months for the Transition Coordinator to locate a fully accessible apartment. Cliff had already been granted a Housing Choice (Section 8) Voucher and was ready to move. Unfortunately, HUD funding for Housing Choice Vouchers had been reduced and Cliff found himself on a waiting list. The apartment sat empty. Knowing that the landlord would not be able to hold the apartment open for long, Cliff requested and was given "bridge funding" through the grant that made it possible for him to move in.

Life outside the nursing home has not always been easy. Since moving, Cliff has had additional medical issues that have required finding increased supports. He also discovered that there was a trade-off to the independence of being in the community – isolation. Cliff said, "Even though I hated living in the nursing home, there was always someone around to talk to – even in the middle of the night." Encouraged by his support team, including his case manager from Riverbend Community Mental Health, Cliff began taking part in more community activities. He now has friends who drop in and Cliff says that he is not as lonely.

In the institution, Cliff was told what to do and when to do it. Now, he said, "A lot of people come to my home and tell me what to do. I listen to them. And when they leave, I do what I want."

Cliff is one of the lucky ones. Unfortunately, the grant that supported Cliff's move back to the community ended in 2006. There are many other nursing home residents, who like Cliff, want to return home. They face nearly insurmountable barriers. There are few resources to help individuals make the transition or to provide them with ongoing support in the community. Even if adequate support were available, New Hampshire still lacks the accessible, affordable, and integrated housing needed to make the dream of returning home a reality.

she will always remember, Claire left Greenbriar and moved into her own home. Her dream finally had come true.

That November Claire hosted Thanksgiving dinner. Everyone came – her son and his family, her parents, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews. "I always wanted to do holidays, but I always had to go to somebody else's house," she said. "We had a great time. There was more food than you knew what to do with." Claire remembered this first Thanksgiving in her home as, "a celebration of everything!"

Claire loves her expanded horizons. She says feels safe living in her own home and has closer connections with her family and friends. Family members visit often and help out with household maintenance. When her son comes there is plenty of room for her granddaughter Abby to play. Claire is writing her autobiography and looking for an editor. She's thinking about going to work. "It's wonderful being able to have those choices," she said.



FAIR HOUSING RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Karen Rosenberg, Esq., Disabilities Rights Center

People with disabilities have the right to be free from discrimination in housing. Federal and state “fair housing laws” require housing providers, including property owners, landlords, and real estate agents, to provide equal housing opportunities to people with disabilities as are enjoyed by people without disabilities.¹

HOW DOES THE LAW PROTECT ME?

It is unlawful for a housing provider to refuse to sell or rent a dwelling because the person who intends to buy, rent, or live in the dwelling has a disability. A landlord may not refuse to rent to a person because that person uses a wheelchair, is blind, or has a history of mental illness. A landlord cannot say that a particular dwelling is not available for sale or rent when, in fact, it is available. For example, a property manager would violate fair housing laws if he or she only showed the most expensive apartment to a person who is deaf because that might lead the prospective tenant to believe there are no affordable units available for rent.

It is unlawful for a housing provider to discriminate in the terms or conditions of the sale or rental of a dwelling because of a person's disability. Housing providers are free to use legitimate non-discriminatory criteria, such as credit history and references, to determine whether an individual is qualified to live in the housing offered. However, it is illegal for a landlord to impose different application or qualification criteria, or different fees, terms or conditions for persons with disabilities than are required for persons who do not have disabilities. For example, unless the landlord asks all applicants, the landlord is not permitted to ask for information concerning a prospective tenant's ability to comply with the rules of tenancy. Similarly, it would be unlawful for a landlord to require a blind applicant to live with a roommate where the landlord does not require all tenants to live with roommates. Finally, no matter what the landlord's intentions, a landlord may not ask about the nature or extent of an individual's disability during the screening process.

¹ Note that not all disabilities, types of property, or property owners are covered under federal and state fair housing laws. This article presents general information about fair housing laws for people with disabilities. If you believe you have faced illegal housing discrimination or have questions about fair housing laws, you should seek further information from a qualified authority including the NH Commission for Human Rights, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Disabilities Rights Center or a private attorney.

Assisted Living Facilities in New Hampshire

Joanne T. Petito, Esq. – formerly Directing Attorney for Consumer Law Project for Seniors, New Hampshire Legal Assistance – Ms. Petito is now in private practice in Exeter.

As defined by state law (NH RSA 1161-J:2 (II)), an assisted living facility is one which provides housing, as well as providing or arranging for either personal assistance or any health-related or supportive service beyond room and board, to one or more adults who are not related to the owner of the residence by blood or marriage.

Only a facility that is licensed as a “residential care facility” under NH RSA 151 may call itself an assisted living facility. There are three types of assisted living

facilities under NH RSA 151:9: a nursing facility, a residential care facility, and supported residential care. However, the term is most commonly used to refer to residential care facilities, and this article focuses on those facilities.

Assisted living facilities vary widely both in the types of services they provide and the intensity of those services. State law, NH RSA 161-J:4, requires facilities to state their base rate residence fees and the services that are included

Fair Housing laws require housing providers to permit two types of changes, "reasonable modifications" and "reasonable accommodations," to make existing housing accessible to people with disabilities.

"Reasonable Modifications" are structural changes, usually made at the resident's expense², that are made to allow a person with disabilities to fully use the housing and common areas. Examples of "reasonable modifications" include installing a ramp into a building and lowering kitchen counter-tops for a tenant who uses a wheelchair. Although the housing provider is required to permit such modifications, the property owner may require the resident to return the property to its original condition if the modification would make the dwelling unacceptable to the next resident.

"Reasonable Accommodations" are changes in rules, policies, practices, or services that enable people with disabilities to have equal opportunities to use and enjoy their dwellings or common areas. Examples of "reasonable accommodations" include waiving a "no dogs" policy to enable a blind tenant to have a guide dog and reserving a close-in parking space for a tenant with mobility impairment even though parking is generally not reserved.

WHERE CAN I TURN FOR HELP?

If you believe you are experiencing discrimination, seek help right away! There are several options available to victims of housing discrimination. You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Phone 1-800-827-5005, <http://www.hud.gov> or the NH Human Rights Commission Phone 603-271-2767, <http://www.state.nh.us/hrc/> and/or consult with an attorney. The Disabilities Rights Center may be able to help if you are experiencing housing discrimination due to a disability, including a landlord's refusal to make reasonable accommodations for your disability, threatening you with eviction, or refusing to rent to you due to your disability or that of a family member. New Hampshire Legal Assistance also provides assistance in cases of housing discrimination; visit their website, www.nhla.org for the telephone number of the most convenient office.

² Federally subsidized housing providers may be required to pay for modifications if doing so would not pose an undue financial or administrative burden.

in those fees, as well as services not included in the base rate. However, the law does not detail the specificity with which those services must be described. For example, one facility might state that laundry services are provided, while another might specify the type of items and frequency that they will be laundered. As with any contracted service, be sure you understand the details before you sign.

It is important for consumers to consider not only those services they currently need for assisted living, but also those they anticipate needing in the future. This is especially critical as state law prohibits an assisted living

facility from keeping residents whose care needs cannot be met by the facility; residents who require more intensive care over time may find themselves being discharged or transferred to another facility.

Although some facilities list many potential grounds for discharge, state law permits transfer and discharge of residents for only three reasons: (1) the resident's welfare, as determined for medical reasons after appropriate discharge planning; (2) the facility ceases to operate; and (3) nonpayment for resident's stay. In addition, 30 days

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Easier Living in the Home Using Assistive Technology

Dr. Therese Willkomm, Assistive Technology in New Hampshire

Solutions for easier living can benefit all of us regardless of whether or not we have difficulties associated with aging, changes in health, or acquiring a disability. Architects and product manufacturers recognize the value that universal design plays in making life easier for all. Thousands of products that were originally designed for someone who experiences a disability, in fact benefit everyone.

Everyone is at risk of an injury from slipping or falling at home. Pharmacies, building supply companies, sporting goods and hardware stores all carry an assortment of items to reduce this risk. Non-slip floor tiles, traction tape, grab bars, and pull on shoe grippers are just a few of these products. Kitchen utensils and hand tools are now being manufactured with better grips that make them easier for everyone to use, not just people with arthritis. Black and Decker has an assortment of tools, including a power tape measure and a power wrench, that can be operated with one hand. There are devices for moving furniture; products that reduce, bending, reaching, carrying, or lifting that are a must for everyone concerned about preserving their backs.

As we get older, we all experience those "senior moments;" memory aids such as automatic shut offs for coffee makers, irons, or other appliances provide peace of mind for everyone. There are also several reminder devices on the market with alarms that tell us when we need to do something or where we need to be. Talking, beeping, and flashing items are becoming more mainstreamed and are no longer just for people with low vision or hearing loss.

Recently the Assistive Technology in New Hampshire Program (AT in NH) developed *Solutions for Easier Living in Your Neighborhood*. This booklet contains over 218 useful items that can be found at Target, Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Radio Shack, Staples, and other local stores. It includes: Back Saving Solutions, One Handed Solutions, Solutions to Reduce Slips and Falls, Reaching Solutions, Solutions for Low Vision, Solutions for Gripping Difficulty, Solutions for Wheelchair Access, Solutions for Hearing Loss, and Solutions for Easier Remembering and Learning.

In addition to the thousands of commercially available solutions, there are hundreds of products that can be used to modify existing products or create quick solutions. Beyond Duct Tape, Velcro and bailing wire, there are an assortment of tape products for quick fixes; epoxy putty for fabrication of custom solutions; PVC pipe, acrylic, or ridged foam insulation for rapid development of prototypes; quick release fasteners, multiple uses for cable ties, and much more. In my book, *Make a Difference Today – Assistive Technology Solutions in Minutes*, I highlight the multiple uses of 42 locally available materials that can be used in creating solutions. For more information about this publication and *Solutions for Easier Living*, contact AT in NH at (603) 228-2084.

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written notice is required prior to transfer or discharge. There are limited exceptions to the 30 day notice requirement: (1) if an emergency transfer or discharge is mandated by the patient's health care needs and is in accord with the written orders and medical justification of the patient's physician or

advanced registered nurse practitioner; (2) if the transfer or discharge is mandated by the health or safety of other individuals in the facility; (3) if the patient's health has improved sufficiently so the patient no longer needs the services provided by the facility; or (4) if the patient has resided in the facility for less than 30 days.

When Landlords Don't Get It

Julia Freeman-Woolpert, Disabilities Rights Center

Sandra and Teri Ann Charles, along with Dinky the cat and Rex the Wonder Dog, share a public housing apartment in Keene. More than beloved pets, Dinky and Rex are also service animals. The federal Fair Housing law requires landlords to allow service animals, even in "no pets" housing. In spite of having the law on their side, it took a significant effort by Sandra and Teri to convince their landlord to honor this obligation.

Teri has multiple sclerosis, which causes intermittent weakness and problems with her balance. When she is walking with difficulty, Rex stays by her side providing support. If Teri falls, Rex stabilizes her so she can get up and when she drops something he retrieves it. As the result of a traumatic childhood, Teri also suffers from periodic depression. The emotional support Rex offers is as important for Teri as the physical assistance he provides.

Sandra uses a wheelchair and, like Teri, has multiple disabilities. Her diabetes can cause erratic and dangerous swings in her blood sugar. Her cat, Dinky, senses when her blood sugar level drops. Sandra believes Dinky is able to smell the change in her body chemistry. When this occurs, Dinky alerts Sandra, pestering her until she takes her blood sugar level. This is especially important at night, when Teri might not notice Sandra's condition. If Sandra's blood levels aren't carefully monitored, she risks falling into a diabetic coma.

Before they had Rex, the Charles' had Rocky Road. When Rocky died in June 2006, the women were devastated. They wanted to immediately find another dog that could be trained as a service animal. They needed a large dog to offer the physical support that Teri needs. Their landlord refused to waive his policy of not allowing tenants to own dogs over 30 pounds, even though Rocky, who was well over 30 pounds, had lived in the building for years without causing problems. The landlord also said he did not consider Dinky a service animal and wanted the cat out of the apartment.



Julia Freeman-Woolpert

Sandra and Teri Ann Charles with Dinky the cat and Rex the Wonder Dog.

Teri and Sandra got busy advocating for themselves. "I did the research on the computer on the laws," Teri said. "I did my homework before we even got a lawyer, so I knew where we stood." Between her internet research and information provided by the Disabilities Rights Center, Teri and Sandra concluded they did have a right to a large dog. They gave the landlord letters from their doctors documenting their need for both Dinky and a large dog; the landlord didn't consider the letters to be sufficient. The women also wrote a letter to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that initiated a complaint against the landlord.

It wasn't until Teri and Sandra contacted Mike Perez, an attorney with New Hampshire Legal Assistance, that they began to move towards a resolution. Perez wrote a letter to the landlord and followed up with the HUD complaint. In a meeting with the Charles', their landlord, and the landlord's attorney, Mike worked to develop a cooperative relationship between the parties while still being firm about the women's rights as tenants with disabilities. Sandra and Teri agreed to get a more specific documentation from the doctors about their need for the service animals and the landlord agreed the Charles' could get another dog and that they could keep Dinky. With the matter was settled, they withdrew the complaint to HUD.

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Sandra and Teri found Rex at the local animal shelter. "He was just over a year old when we got him," remembered Sandra. "It was September first, on Rocky's birthday. So we thought Rocky had a paw in that." Rex had been abused; it's amazing he's alive at all, hence the name Rex the Wonder Dog. Normally an abused animal would be less than ideal as a service dog, but nurturing Rex and helping him learn to trust people, has been therapeutic for both Teri and Sandra.

The pet policy was only one of the landlord-tenant issues the women have faced. Earlier they had requested and were denied an accessible parking space close to the building. Teri learned from her research into the Fair Housing law that a landlord was required to make reasonable modifications to the parking policies in order to accommodate tenants with disabilities. Sandra called the Disabilities Rights Center and spoke with an attorney who wrote a letter to the landlord. The landlord assigned them an accessible parking space.

Unhappy over these and other landlord-tenant problems, the couple at one point looked for another apartment. "We couldn't find anything that was wheelchair accessible," Sandra said. Affordable and accessible housing is in scarce supply in New Hampshire. Fortunately, with their landlord-tenant problems now resolved, the Charles's are happy to stay in their apartment with Dinky and Rex.

My Dream House

Tammy Mills

I've been living with my family for over 38 years, and I love it. But what I don't love about it is when my kid brother picks on me and orders me around all the time. Sometimes I feel the need for time and space away from my brother, because his temper really gets on my nerves. Oh, BUMMER!

I have a dream house that I'd like to see built and placed near the town library and church in Plainfield where I live. This way, I can walk to the library, church, the park, and of course, to the village store. Everything is all on one side of Route 12A, and it'll all be within walking distance from where I'd live. Now I have to get a ride to church on Sundays. With all the stretch of dirt road I'd have to travel, I can't get there on foot. In winter slipping and sliding on ice is my biggest fear.

My dream house will have lots of floor space compared to my current home. The reason being is that it's 4 times extra BIG. If the phone rings and I'm in a hurry to get to it, I won't have to trip over obstacles like I do in my family's double-wide trailer. My house will be accessible with the cupboards low enough to reach for bread and cereals and instead of stove-top cooking, I'd make all my meals in the microwave oven. If I need to do my own laundry, the washer and dryer will have buttons right at my eye level. On cold days, if I want to go to the adjoining recreation barn, all I'd have to do is walk down the hall. The barn will be air conditioned in the summertime and heated in winter.

Currently, with the help of agency staff and my family, I get around as much as I can. I attend meetings, sing in a chorus, go bowling, and to exercise classes. Hopefully if there's a way for a public bus system to come into Plainfield, I can take the bus to wherever I want to go, including other parts of New England, as well as New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

That's where a computer course entitled *Partners In Living* comes in. It's teaching me about self-determination and person-centered planning. But I can't get past the second module, because after I complete the first exam, I get messages saying, "Please answer question 2." and so on until I get to the last message. Then I have to do the whole thing over again. For me, it's like, "OH, RATSI!"

As far as I'm concerned with housing, it's all a part of the DD Council's 5-year plan. So I'll have to wait until the Home-of-Your-Own program is a little more feasible.

Like Family

By Julia Freeman-Woolpert

When she was 25, Samantha Eldredge moved out of her father's Somersworth home to live with Ellie Litzenberger, her Enhanced Family Care provider. Now 33, Samantha has been with Ellie for more than eight years. In New Hampshire, Enhanced Family Care is the most common model of residential services for people with developmental disabilities. Under this model, an Area Agency contracts with a private individual who agrees to share their home with a person with a disability and provide that person with needed support and assistance.

Samantha and her father, Pete Eldredge, first met Ellie when Samantha was 21. "After she grew up, I started getting services for her in the daytime," said Pete. "Before, I was showering her and stuff that I had to do, but there wasn't much dignity for her." One day Roxanne, a caregiver who has known Samantha since childhood, brought her best friend Ellie to work with her. "The rest, as they say, is history," Pete remembered. "Ellie comes out to the kitchen and says to me, 'Samantha's awesome! When I turn 18 I want to put in an application at the agency. I want to work for her.' And that's what happened."

When Ellie turned 18 she became Samantha's personal care assistant working with her at the Eldredge's home, an arrangement that continued for four years. Samantha, Pete, and Ellie all got along very well. "But I was getting older" said Pete. He and his daughter didn't get out much and Pete wanted Samantha to have a life of her own. "What girl wants to hang out with her sixty-some year old Dad?" Pete asked.

It was time for a change. One day Pete asked Ellie, "Have you thought about being a home provider?"

Ellie's response, "I thought you'd never ask."

At the time Ellie was living in an apartment with her friend Roxanne and Roxanne's children. After completing all the arrangements with the Area Agency, Samantha moved in with them. Samantha was a little homesick at first, but she adjusted. The arrangement has worked well for everyone. Samantha now has a fuller social life than she did when she was living with her father.

Samantha still visits her father often and they have remained close. "Last week I slept at Dad's house on Friday and I was snoring," Samantha laughed. It is a standing joke between the three of them that Samantha snores when she stays over at her Dad's house, but not when she is in her own home.

Samantha and Ellie enjoy being together; they go shopping, spend time cooking, and just hang out. For more than five years Samantha has worked part time on a production line for a business that makes nameplates. Ellie brings her in to work, helps her set up for the day, and then leaves. If Samantha needs anything at work, the other women who work on the line step in to help. In the world of human services, this is

(Continued on page 14)



Julia Freeman-Woolpert

Samantha Eldredge with her father Pete and her home care provider Ellie Litzenberger.



Coming in from the Cold: Creating Solutions to Homelessness for People with Disabilities

Peter Kelleher, LICSW, Executive Director, Harbor Homes, Inc.

To most of us, the risk of becoming homeless may seem remote. Yet, homelessness often results from sudden life changes – divorce, unemployment, illness – that could happen to any of us. Hearing the stories of how individuals and families become homeless makes you realize, that had circumstances and timing been slightly different, your own family could have been confronted with the challenge of starting over.

Since the 1970s, homelessness has been on the rise in New Hampshire and across the nation. The 2007 *Annual Homeless Assessment* from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports that on any given night, 754,000 people are homeless nationwide. Annually, between 2.3 and 3.5 million people, one-third of them children, experience homelessness at least once. While these raw numbers are staggering, the true impact of homelessness on individuals and families is beyond measure.

For individuals with disabilities, finding safe and affordable housing is especially difficult. For this population, securing adequate employment and/or financial support, finding accessible and appropriate housing, and accessing sufficient care and supports are all critical to maintaining a stable home. Those with mental illness often have difficulty maintaining interpersonal relationships and do not have the human safety net on which so many of us depend in times of crisis. Individuals with disabilities who lack adequate financial resources and have few supportive relationships are especially vulnerable to becoming homeless. These individuals also are more likely to be “chronically homeless” – having no fixed or adequate place of residence for a year or more.

According to the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Homeless, Housing, and Transportation, 23% of the homeless in the Granite State are living with a known mental illness and an additional 7% struggle with both mental illness and addiction. On the community level, the Greater Nashua Continuum of Care’s annual point-in-time count on January 25, 2006, identified a total of 582 people, including 79 families with children, who were homeless in Nashua and the surrounding towns. Of this total, 29.2% were categorized as having a severe mental illness and 19.4% as living with chronic substance abuse. The needs of these individuals place significant strain on area emergency services – a local hospital reported that one homeless individual had sixty-five (65) hospital admissions during a 12-month period.

Conquering homelessness is a struggle for anyone; when homelessness is combined with a disability, such as a serious mental illness, the struggle can be overwhelming. With appropriate community services, however, it is possible for many homeless persons with mental illness to be reintegrated successfully into their communities, rather than to be warehoused in mental hospitals or other institutions.

A five-year study in New York City revealed that not only is providing supportive housing for homeless persons with mental illnesses compassionate, it is also cost-effective. Researchers followed 5,000 homeless persons with mental illnesses, half of whom were placed in government-funded housing with mental health services available. These individuals used far fewer emergency services, which resulted in a savings of an average of \$12,145 per individual per year. Placement in supportive housing led to a 60% reduction in emergency shelter use, a 50% reduction in the use of state psychiatric centers, a 21% drop in the use of publicly funded hospitals, and an 85% reduction in the use of prisons. In addition, there was a 75% increase in their use of outpatient services – an indicator that these individuals were using more mainstream services and living more independently.

New Hampshire has begun to make inroads in addressing and preventing homelessness, including chronic homelessness. In 2006 the state adopted a ten-year plan, which outlines specific steps to combat the problem. Governor Lynch recently proposed a \$400,000 revolving loan program to allow the homeless to borrow money for security deposits, and another \$400,000 to build affordable housing. Bills currently pending in the legislature would create a state Council for the Homeless, allow individuals without a permanent address to register their cars, and provide funds to study homelessness among teens.

The Greater Nashua Continuum of Care (CoC) offers agencies and municipalities an effective model for working collaboratively to address the issues of homelessness. For over a decade, the CoC has brought together representatives from federal, state, and city government; housing programs; hospitals; veterans; social service agencies; homeless people; emergency services; businesses; and the faith based community to find ways to decrease homelessness in Greater Nashua. The CoC has been instrumental in expanding the availability of stable, supported housing. In the past year alone, the area has seen a 24% reduction in chronic homelessness and through the coordinated efforts of CoC members, 44 individuals now have supportive housing.

Harbor Homes, a member of the CoC since its inception, provides permanent supportive housing, emergency shelter, employment services, and peer support to people who are homeless and/or have a mental illness. The agency began in 1980 with a nine-bed group home for homeless individuals with mental illness. Today Harbor Homes serves more than a thousand people a year in 23 programs, 17 of which are residential. The agency recognizes that just as homelessness has many causes, solutions must be uniquely tailored to meet individual needs. Integrating housing and supportive services enables many of our clients to re-enter the work force; establish new, positive connections; and contribute to their community.

Here in New Hampshire, we've seen that supporting people with disabilities creates long-lasting successes. Promoting more partnerships between housing and supportive service systems not only improves outcomes for individuals with disabilities who are homeless, but also is cost effective – reducing incarcerations, emergency room usage, psychiatric hospital admissions, and the need for more emergency shelter beds. As a community, we have shown that it is possible to reduce homelessness and improve services for individuals with disabilities – imagine what we can accomplish by working together throughout our state.

For more information contact Harbor Homes via the web at www.harborhomes.org or by calling (603) 882-3616.

A Home for Everyone: New Hampshire's Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness (2006) can be accessed at:

<http://www.nashua-coc.org/files/ich/nhtyp.pdf>.

The Annual Homeless Assessment: Report to Congress (2007) can be accessed at:

<http://222.huduser.org/Publications/pdf/ahar.pdf>.

A summary of *The Impact of Supportive Housing for Homeless Persons with Severe Mental Illness on the Utilization of the Public Health, Corrections and Emergency Shelter Systems: The New York/New York Initiative* by Culhane, Metraux & Hadley (2001) can be accessed at <http://www.csh.org/html/NYNYSummary.pdf>.

StoryCorps

Mobile Storybooth Tour coming to New Hampshire, July 5-28, 2007

You know you've got a story to tell. Here's your opportunity.

StoryCorps is a national project to instruct and inspire people to record one another's stories in sound. They want you to interview "your grandmother, your uncle, the lady who has worked at the luncheonette down the block for as long as you can remember – anyone whose story you want to hear and preserve." The stories will be archived at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, and selections from some interviews will be broadcast on National Public Radio. You will get a broadcast quality CD of your interview.

A mobile recording booth will be somewhere in New Hampshire July 5-28. The location has yet to be determined. The Disabilities Rights Center has agreed to be a Community Outreach Partner for StoryCorps, and we are looking for a few good stories to recommend. Contact Julia Freeman-Woolpert if you are interested in finding out more, at juliaf@drcnh.org or 1-800-834-1721.

(Continued from page 11)

known as "natural supports." Samantha loves her job and the people she works with and they love her. Samantha likes to joke that she's the hard worker and the other women on the line just fool around.

Ellie and Samantha both enjoy traveling. They make frequent trips to Rhode Island, where Ellie has family. They've driven down to Florida with Roxanne and gone to Sea World and Disney. They've been to Canada several times, renting a condo near a water park where they enjoyed the slides and the wave pool. On one trip to Canada their wheelchair rental van broke down; they had to wait for hours by the side of the road before the replacement van arrived. It was stressful, but they handled it and even found a little waterfall nearby to enjoy.

As Samantha's guardian Pete appreciates the value of Enhanced Family Care and is thankful that his daughter has the supports she needs. He believes that living with Ellie is a much better alternative than being in a group residence with caregivers who work shifts and where high staff turnover is a problem. "There's nothing permanent," he said. "With this way, you're like a family."

Of course, permanence isn't guaranteed in Enhanced Family Care either. The arrangement lasts only as long as the provider wishes. If the home provider decides to quit, it's the client who has to find another place to live. Occasionally, there is a crisis and the client has to be removed immediately from the home and placed in a respite situation. Lack of adequate state funding for developmental services makes it more difficult to maintain quality residential options. As a licensed home provider Ellie does not get health insurance or receive any other benefits. In the eight years that she has been doing this work, she has *never* gotten a pay raise. To help supplement her income, Ellie has started providing part of Samantha's day program, though the amount of extra income this produces is minimal.

Ellie realizes she can't work forever without health insurance. "I would definitely take insurance over a pay raise," she said. Pete wonders why home providers couldn't receive health insurance through the state system.

Fortunately, Ellie loves being with Samantha and plans to continue being her home provider for as long as she can. Reflecting on their relationship, Ellie commented, "It really is like we're family; we're that comfortable."

Raymond's Room

People with disabilities: The last legally segregated minority?

Dawn Langton, Training Resource Network

Thirty years ago, as a young man working at a facility for children with autism, Dale DiLeo was shown a tiny, hot, and smelly bedroom. Reserved for up to four young men with autism, those least trusted by staff, this room was locked – from the outside – all night long. It was named after Raymond, the room's perennial resident.

In his new book, *Raymond's Room: Ending the Segregation of People with Disabilities*, DiLeo makes a compelling case that today people with disabilities are still locked away from the rest of society. They may not be housed in rooms like Raymond's, but they are placed in facilities and programs run by a public monopoly unwilling to change.

"People with disabilities are the last minority group in which legal segregation for housing and employment is still routinely provided," writes DiLeo. "And their lives are controlled by one of the last publicly funded monopolies in America today." *Raymond's Room* outlines how the continued rampant segregation of people in day and residential programs, sometimes in institutions, sometimes in the community, has stifled the potential of millions of people to live quality lives.

The book mixes memoirs of experiences, both humorous and sad, with illustration and practical advice. DiLeo traces his career from direct care in an institution to international consulting in the disability field. For the most part, he said, his early services, like many disability services today, were delivered in specialized, separate settings. These places were, and still are, segregated and damaging. He asserts, "I believe the disability field is still stuck in an obsolete model that is ineffective, morally wrong, and resis-

tant to change. Every day the number of people going into segregated programs far exceeds those in more integrated ones."

Raymond's Room not only takes aim at institutions, but also challenges the notion that group homes and sheltered workshops are cutting-edge programs.

DiLeo calls the current system the "disability industrial complex," a comparison to Eisenhower's warning of the military industrial complex over forty years ago.

DiLeo notes that we spend billions on services that have largely failed to deliver on their promise to provide very vulnerable people decent homes and jobs. And the blame for this failure is often thrust back to the individuals themselves, with professionals saying people are not capable or ready for such things. But, according to DiLeo, the know-how to provide cost-effective supports, for even those with the most severe disabilities, is available now for jobs and homes. The real challenges are how our society negatively perceives those who have a disability and how these perceptions translate into discrimination.

DiLeo states, "People with disabilities need not live in isolation from the rest of us. Their lives need not be defined by their disability. And they should not be subject to programs that segregate them for employment, housing, and recreation, programs that are largely the result of professional convenience. People with disabilities are much more capable than most people understand, and they should have opportunities to contribute to neighborhoods, workplaces, and civic life."

One of the frequent responses from the disability system to such criticism is that the system must provide "choice" for



Dawn Langton

Dale DiLeo, author of *Raymond's Room*, is an internationally respected disability consultant and advocate. From 1977 to 1991 DiLeo worked in New Hampshire developing community based services for people with developmental disabilities.

(Continued on next page)

Finding an Affordable Home in New Hampshire

Lynn Lippitt, Director, Housing Services, New Hampshire Housing

Everyone needs a place to live that they can afford, but your home should meet your needs as well as fit your pocketbook. Whether you want to rent or own, the first step is to know what you want in a home. Sit down with whoever you are planning to live and draw up a list of all the things that each of you want in a home. Now go through your list and decide what would be nice to have if you could find it and what is absolutely essential. Once you have agreed upon your priorities, you are ready to start looking.

New Hampshire Housing can help you in your search for affordable housing. We operate a broad range of programs designed to assist low and moderate income persons and families obtain decent, safe, and affordable housing. Detailed information about all our programs

can be found on our website at www.nhhfa.org. Below are three options that you might want to explore.

New Hampshire Housing offers a listing of affordable rental opportunities in private and public housing complexes throughout the state. This "Directory of Assisted Housing" includes a number of complexes that offer accessible apartments. To apply, contact the management companies listed in the Directory on our website. Generally apartments are not immediately available, so it is wise to get on their wait lists early.

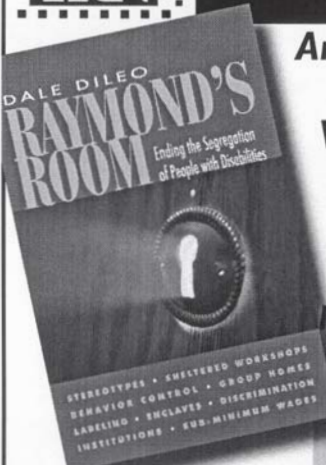
New Hampshire Housing also administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); this rental assistance program is also known as Section 8. With

(Continued from page 3)

people with disabilities from a range of options, including programs that are segregated. DiLeo notes how many proponents of institutions or workshops and group homes say that people have chosen these options and that they report they are happy there. Said DiLeo, "I know that can be true, but it is an incomplete statement. I remember working to help people move out of an old institution that was in very poor condition, a place most of us would agree was horribly offensive. Yet, there were a number of people who expressed that they did not want to leave, and some of their families also said the same thing. The reason this happens over and over again is that people with disabilities have not had the opportunity to make informed choices. Once people experience community life with the proper supports, in my experience, they nearly always elect to not go back to segregation. When you live in a situation for so long, change can appear threatening."

Raymond's Room is published by Training Resource Network, Inc., and can be ordered at:

www.raymondsroom.com or 800-280-7010.



RAYMOND'S ROOM

**Announcing a New Book
About What People
With Disabilities Face:**
**STEREOTYPES • SHELTERED
WORKSHOPS • BEHAVIOR
CONTROL • GROUP HOMES
• DISCRIMINATION •
INSTITUTIONS • SEGREGATION**

Softcover \$15
Hardcover \$24.95

Available from:
◆ eStore: www.trninc.com
◆ Toll-free: 800-280-7010
◆ Fax: 904-823-3554

Also available from:
◆ amazon.com
◆ BARNES&NOBLE.com

"If confession is good for the soul, then Raymond's Room has been good for me... should be required reading... Thank you, Dale, for telling the truth."
—ANN TURNBULL, Ed.D., PROFESSOR,
SPECIAL EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF KA

"...shakes us from thinking that what Dale writes is the past, when in fact, for many, many people, it is the present. Get this book and read it."
—CARY GRIFFIN, GRIFFIN-HAMMIS ASSOCIATES, MT

"...puts reality right back in our faces."
—AL CONDELUCI, Ph.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
UCP OF PITTSBURGH

www.raymondsroom.com

this program you locate the apartment or house you want to rent and your Housing Choice Voucher can be used to help pay your rent. You must meet the program's eligibility requirements and the housing must meet HUD's Housing Quality Standards. Unfortunately, this program often has wait lists of several years. To get an application or to find out more about Housing Choice Vouchers, go to www.nhhfa.org or contact the Public Housing Authority in your city.

You may not realize that homeownership can actually be affordable. New Hampshire Housing offers many programs to help first time homebuyers. If you already have a Housing Choice Voucher, you may also be able

to receive assistance in paying a mortgage. The Single Family Mortgage Program is our primary lending program for homeownership, however, New Hampshire Housing also finances and administers several Special Mortgage Programs to assist previously underserved populations to become homeowners. We work with local non-profit housing agencies such as AHEAD, CATCH, Neighborworks of Greater Manchester, the Housing Partnership, and Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Nashua. To find out if homeownership is an option for you, we recommend that you attend a First-Time Homebuyer workshop sponsored by New Hampshire Housing or by local housing agencies.

Ten Steps to Homeownership

Patricia Vincent-Piet, www.ablewriter.com

Thinking of buying a home? Following these steps can help the process go more smoothly.

- 1. Find a mortgage broker** – A mortgage broker is someone who is licensed to represent several different lending institutions. Mortgage options abound and there are even some specifically intended for people with disabilities. A good place to start looking is your local non-profit housing organization. (See the Housing Resources in this issue.)
- 2. Get pre-approved for a loan** – Before you start house hunting, a mortgage broker will need to pre-approve you for a mortgage and provide you with a letter stating the maximum amount you can afford for a home. This will help guide you in finding homes in your price range.
- 3. Find a real estate agent** – Not all real estate agents are alike. Finding an agent you feel comfortable with can be challenging, especially if you have unique needs. Use your personal network; ask your family, friends, and colleagues for their recommendations. A database of all New Hampshire realtors can be found at www.nhra.org. Interviewing several agents can help to ensure that you find an agent who understands your requirements.
- 4. Sign a buyer's agency agreement** – Once you have chosen a real estate agent, it is in your best interest to sign a buyer's agency agreement. In it, the real estate agent promises to diligently work on your behalf, and you promise to work only with that agent. If you are unsure about working with an agent, don't be pressured into signing a buyer's agency. However, this agreement is to your advantage and most good agents will offer you an agency agreement. If yours doesn't, find a different agent.
- 5. Let the agent work for you** – You may be tempted to go looking on your own, but if you have signed a buyer's agency your agent will be able to show you any homes that become available. A good agent will carefully screen homes for you. If you have an agency agreement, do not contact other agencies. Mistakenly signing a contract with another agent could cost you additional money.
- 6. Make an offer** – When you find the home that's right for you, it's time to make an offer. If you are

(Continued on next page)

uncertain how much to offer, your agent can find out what similar homes have sold for and help guide you through the process.

7. Line up the ducks – Once an offer has been accepted and a closing date has been set, the agent's work really begins. She will coordinate with the mortgage broker and oversee the inspection and all other details. Again, it is important to let her do her job. In the meantime, it's time for you to . . .

8. Start packing – You'll need to decide if you want to hire professional movers or move your-

self. If you are willing to pay more, a moving company can help you pack as well as move your belongings. Begin early and enlist plenty of help.

9. Close on your new home – When closing day arrives, all you should need to do is show up and sign papers, but you will be signing a lot of papers. Take your time, and don't be afraid to ask questions. If they offer you something to drink, take it. You're going to be there awhile.

10. Move-in. And start enjoying a home of your own!



EasyLiving Homes Come to New Hampshire



Back in the summer of 2005, the RAP sheet featured an article on the EasyLiving Home; a program developed by a coalition of public and private organizations to encourage the voluntary inclusion of key features that make a home affordable, accessible, and convenient for all buyers without sacrificing style or adding substantial costs.

The EasyLiving Home is built to ensure Easy Access, Easy Passage, and Easy Use. Specifications for EasyLiving Homes include; step free entrances into the house and in the central living area of the home; wider exterior and first floor interior doorways, measuring a minimum of 32 inches; and floor plans with sufficient space for wheelchair maneuverability in the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, and living rooms.

J.H. Spain Associates, of Concord, is the first New Hampshire builder to be certified to build EasyLiving Homes. Joe Spain, owner and President of J. H. Spain Associates, has been in business for 24 years.

EasyLiving Homes is a natural fit for Joe who designs homes with an eye to the future that accommodate homeowners' needs as they grow older and enable them to remain in their homes longer. From initial design to the aesthetic integration of ramps and other necessities, J. H. Spain Associates are building accessible homes that incorporate Universal design features and include all the details you desire in a dream home.

J. H. Spain has started construction on its first EasyLiving home in Boscawen, New Hampshire; this model home will be ready to view in the spring of 2007. This beautiful home will have 3 bedrooms, 2¾ baths, and include cathedral ceilings in the main living area. All floors are designed to allow for easy wheelchair maneuverability.

To schedule an appointment to view the model or for more information, please contact us at 603-224-8583 or visit our web page at www.jhspain.com.

The RAP Sheet is a free quarterly publication; to subscribe please contact
the Disabilities Rights Center

603-228-0432

Upcoming IOD Training and Events



INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY / UCED
A University Center for Excellence in Disability

LIFE AS A PARAPROFESSIONAL Strategies for Working with Students with Challenging Behaviors

Learn to promote responsible student behavior in this highly inter-active session. This in depth examination of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) emphasizes classroom-based approaches. *Register early space is limited!*

Instructor: Cathy Apfel

Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Date and Location: May 3, 2007
The Highlander Inn,
Manchester, NH

Registration Fee: \$90

THE 2007 AUTISM MINI-SERIES

The New Hampshire Resource Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders Informative hosts a discussion series on ASD designed to provide practical ideas to complement teaching and parenting strategies. *Register early, space is limited!*

University of New Hampshire Campus
Institute on Disability's Conference Room
10 West Edge Drive, Suite 101, Durham NH 03824

WORKSHOPS:

Educating Students with ASD in General Education
Classes: Fostering Communication

Instructor: Rae Sonnenmeier, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Date: May 7, 2007

Time: 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

This session will provide strategies for fostering communication among students with ASD, classmates, and teachers during both academic and social activities.

PECS & Augmentative Communication

Instructor: Michael McSheehan

Date: June 13, 2007

Time: 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Learn about AAC supports, including Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) for students who have limited speech or who do not communicate in traditional ways.

Registration Fee: \$25 for each session

WHOSE DECISION IS IT ANYWAY? Training on Legal Issues for those Who Work with Seniors

When can and can't a person legally make decisions about his or her own affairs?

This workshop will help those who work with seniors to understand the rules and laws around decision making. Discussions will include informed decisions and competency issues using case examples.

Instructor: Mary McGuire, Esquire

Time: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Thursday, May 17, 2007

The Conference Center at Lake Opechee Inn,
Laconia, NH

Thursday, June 21, 2007

Crowne Plaza Nashua,
2 Somerset Parkway, Nashua, NH

Registration Fee: \$12 – Includes breakfast
and workshop materials

* *Whose Decision is it Anyway?* has been approved by the NH Chapter NASW for three (3) Category I Continuing Education Credits in Ethics for social workers.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE THEORY FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS Strategies for Teachers and Paraprofessionals

This day long workshop will teach Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence (MI) theory and how it can support education in the classroom. You will learn how MI theory can be used to 1) make appropriate curricular accommodations, 2) understand and support challenging student behavior, and 3) design meaningful student assessments. Participants will leave with reading materials and concrete activities to try in their classrooms.

Instructor: Susan Shapiro-Barnard, M.Ed.

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Horseshoe Pond Place, Concord, NH

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

North Country Health Consortium, Littleton, NH

Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Registration Fee: \$65

**More on
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Housing Resources

Affordable and Accessible Housing

Granite State Independent Living

21 Chenell Drive
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 228-9680 or (800) 826-3700
TDD: (888) 396-3459
<http://www.gsil.org/housing.php>
The GSIL website has an accessible housing registry.

New Hampshire Community Loan Fund

7 Wall Street,
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 224-6669
info@nhclf.org
www.theloanfund.org
Assistance with: affordable housing, including mortgages on manufactured homes; micro-credit; Individual Development Accounts; Home of Your Own Program, and more.

New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority

P.O. Box 5087
Manchester, NH 03108
Phone: (603) 472.8623 or 1.800.640.7239
TDD: (603) 472.2089
<http://www.nhhfa.org/>
Administers the Housing Choice (Section 8) Voucher program and funds several homeownership programs. Assisted and accessible housing directories and list of approved mortgage brokers can be found on their web site.



Sign up for *DRCNH News*, current e-news from the Disabilities Rights Center!

The Disabilities Rights Center wants you to have access to the information you need to advocate for yourself, your family, and all people with disabilities. Bulletins go out by email once or twice a week and contain important information about disability rights issues: news, resources, training, publications, legislation, and updates on information available on the DRC's website.

To join the list, send an email to juliaf@drcnh.org asking that you be added to the list.

Re-igniting the Disabilities Rights Movement!

James and Patricia Piet's website has information and articles about housing issues. <http://ablewriter.com>



The following Non-profit Housing Providers offer housing-related services including affordable housing development, mortgage brokerage, first-time homebuyer education and financial fitness training. These organizations should be the first contact for anyone thinking of purchasing a home (except area agency consumers).

Affordable Housing Education and Development

PO Box 578
Littleton, NH 03561
Phone: (603) 444-1377
www.homesahead.com

Cheshire Housing Trust

39 Central Square, Suite 303
Keene, NH 03431
Phone: (603) 357-7603

Concord Area Trust for Community Housing

79 South State Street
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 225-8835
www.catchhousing.org

Contoocook Housing Trust

PO Box 216
New Ipswich, NH 03071
Phone: (603) 878-1247
www.housingtrust.org

The Housing Partnership

1555 Islington St.
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: (603) 431-3620
www.housingpartnership.org

Housing Resources, Continued

Laconia Area Community Land Trust

PO Box 6104
Laconia, NH 03247
(603) 524-0747
www.vbthnh.com/html/lact.html

Manchester Neighborhood Housing Services

968 Elm St.
Manchester, NH 03104
Phone: (603) 314-4663
www.mnhs.net

Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Nashua

PO Box 443
Nashua, NH 03060
Phone: 598-8184

Twin Pines Housing Trust

106 Railroad Row
White River Junction, VT 05001
Phone: (802) 291-7000

Twin Rivers Community Corporation

608 West Main St.
Tilton, NH 03276
(603) 286-7710



Help for Homelessness

NH Department of Health and Human Services' Homeless, Housing, & Transportation Services

105 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 271-5142 or 800-852-3345 x5142
TDD: (800) 735-2964
<http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/OHHTS/default.htm>

The Homeless Hotline

New Hampshire Helpline
1-800-852-3388
The Homeless Hotline is answered 24-hour/365 day a year by a real person and never a recording. NH Help Line's Information & Referral Specialists are available Mon-Fri. from 8AM to 8PM. During after hours, callers will be directed to numbers for crisis assistance.

New Hampshire Coalition to End Homelessness

www.nhceh.org

Working to eliminate the causes of homelessness. A copy of "A Home for Everyone: New Hampshire's Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness" is available on this site.



Assistance with Housing Discrimination

Disabilities Rights Center

18 Low Avenue
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: (603) 228-0432 or (800) 834-1721
<http://www.drcnh.org>
Housing resources: <http://www.drcnh.org/Issue%20Areas/Housing.htm>
Legal assistance with disability-related housing problems

New Hampshire Legal Assistance

<http://www.nhla.org/>
Contact info for branch offices can be found here: http://www.nhla.org/contact_us.php

US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Manchester Field Office
1000 Elm Street , 8th Floor
Manchester, NH 03101-1730
Phone: (603) 666-7510 x3903
Email: NH_Webmanager@hud.gov
HUD's website for people with disabilities: <http://www.hud.gov/groups/disabilities.cfm>

New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights

2 Chenell Drive
Concord, NH 03301-8501
Phone: (603) 271-2767
E-mail: humanrights@nhsa.state.nh.us
<http://www.nh.gov/hrc/>

A state agency for the purpose of eliminating discrimination in employment, public accommodations and the sale or rental of housing or commercial property, because of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, creed, color, marital status, familial status, physical or mental disability or national origin. The commission has the power to receive, investigate and pass on complaints of illegal discrimination.

Housing Resources, Continued

Information on national housing policy and how to advocate for more affordable, accessible and integrated housing can be found at the following web sites:

Bazon Center for Mental Health Law

www.bazon.org/issues/housing/index.htm

Offers information on housing rights for individuals with mental health issues.

Disability Rights Action Coalition for Housing

www.drach.org

Information on federal policies that segregate people with disabilities and what can be done to change them.

Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities Housing Task Force

www.c-c-d.org

Works with Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to increase access affordable housing and to protect the rights guaranteed under the Fair Housing Act.

Fair Housing First

www.fairhousingfirst.org

Initiative to promote compliance with the Fair Housing Act design and construction requirements. The program offers instruction programs, online web resources, and a toll-free information line for technical support.

National Coalition for the Homeless

www.nationalhomeless.org

Working to end homelessness in America by advocating for increased affordable housing for people with low-incomes and advocates on behalf of the homeless.

National Fair Housing Advocate Online

www.fairhousing.com

Provides the fair housing advocacy community and the general public with information regarding the issues of housing discrimination.

National Low Income Housing Coalition

www.nlihc.org

Dedicated solely to ending America's affordable housing crisis.

(Continued from page 3)

Outside of his part-time work as a stock associate at Marshall's, Lavigne indulges many interests. He loves to dance and perform in musicals. He ice skates, competing in the Special Olympics. He swims. He follows the Red Sox and cooks. He loves planting flowers. And almost daily, Lavigne walks to the center of Dover with his aide, Tim Jenkins, to have a cup of coffee and exchange greetings with the Dover regulars.

"I love it here," he said.

Since 1996, 79 individuals have bought homes through the Home of Your Own Program. To be considered for HOYO, a potential participant must be an adult with developmental disabilities, who is connected to a local Area Agency for Developmentally Disabilities in the state, and is receiving a residential budget through the Area Agency. For more information, contact Barbara Howard by email at bhoward@nbclf.org or by phone at (603) -224-6669 or (800) 432-4110.

Upcoming IOD Training and Events,

Continued from page 19

VOICES OF FRIENDSHIP

How Schools Can Help or Hinder the Development of Social Relationships

Friendships are the spice of life and they, they are essential to student achievement and successful outcomes. However, many students with disabilities report they are lonely and lack meaningful relationships with classmates. This workshop will help participants learn to identify the barriers to friendship, as well strategies to facilitate friendships.

Instructor: Carol Tashie

Location & Date: Wednesday, May 2, 2007,
Institute on Disability,
Concord, NH

Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Registration Fee: \$85

THE 9TH ANNUAL AUTISM SUMMER INSTITUTE

Raising Expectations: Presuming Competence! The Importance of High Expectations for Learning, Communication and Friendship

This 4 day conference will provide the opportunity to hear and learn from persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and other experts about the importance of presuming competence for those with ASD. Participants will discuss the implications of presuming competence on children's inclusion in general education classrooms.

Presenters: Ros Blackburn, Jamie Burke,
Donna Williams

Location & Date: August 13-16, 2007
University of NH,
Holloway Commons,
Durham, NH

Time: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Registration Fee: \$390

** Discounted rates for parents, full-time students and those interested in participating in keynote presentation(s) only are available*

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER LEADERSHIP & SKILL BUILDING SEMINAR

Evidence-based exemplary practices for
supporting children (birth to 3) with or
at-risk for autism spectrum disorder and
their families

Locations & Dates for the 3 Part Seminar –

Seacoast: May 2nd, May 29th, and June 26th
Portsmouth Public Library

North Country: April 24th, April 25th,
and June 12th,
Granite State College, Conway,

Manchester: April 11th, May 23rd, and June 6th
5/23 - Manchester Library

Instructors –

Rae Sonnenmeier, Ph.D., CCC-SLP,
Clinical Assistant Professor, Institute on Disability
Ann Dillon, M.Ed., OTL,
Clinical Assistant Professor, Institute on Disability

Time: 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Cost: There is no cost to attend.
Please bring lunch.

**Space is limited. Priority will be given to Early Support and Service providers and families of children under age 3 with or at-risk for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).*

3 EASY WAYS TO REGISTER!

online



WWW.OID.UNH.EDU



mail

INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY
56 Old Suncook Rd., Suite 2
Concord, NH 03301



fax

603-228-3270

DISABILITIES RIGHTS CENTER, INC.

18 Low Avenue, Concord, NH 03301-4971

Voice and TDD: (603) 228-0432 ♦ 1-800-834-1721 ♦ FAX: (603) 225-2077

TDD access also through NH Relay Service: 1-800-735-2964 (Voice and TDD)

E-mail: advocacy@drcnh.org ♦ Website: www.drcnh.org

"Protection and Advocacy System for New Hampshire"

The Disabilities Rights Center is dedicated to eliminating barriers to the full and equal enjoyment of civil and other legal rights for people with disabilities.

INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY/UCED – UNIVERSITY OF NH

10 West Edge Drive, Suite 101, Durham, NH 03824-3522

Phone (Tel/TTY): (603) 862-4320 ♦ Fax: (603) 862-0555 ♦ Website: www.iod.unh.edu

Institute on Disability/UNH – Concord

56 Old Suncook Road, Suite 2

Concord, NH 03301

Phone (Tel/TTY): (603) 228-2084

Institute on Disability/UNH – Manchester

340 Commercial Street, 2nd floor

Manchester, NH 03101

Phone: (603) 628-7681

The Institute on Disability advances policies and systems changes, promising practices, education and research that strengthen communities and ensure full access, equal opportunities, and participation for all persons.

NH COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

21 South Fruit Street, Suite 22, Room 290

Concord, NH 03301-2451

Phone: (603) 271-3236 ♦ TTY/TDD: 1-800-735-2964 ♦ Website: www.nhddc.com

Dignity, full rights of citizenship, equal opportunity, and full participation for all New Hampshire citizens with developmental disabilities.

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21 South Fruit Street, Suite 22, Room 290

Concord, NH 03301-2451

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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