



4439 Mormon Coulee Road
La Crosse, WI 54601

Non Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 19
La Crosse, WI

Empowerment

Independent Living Resources, Inc.

Winter
2011

Women Supporting Women

Support Group

Every Thursday

1-3pm

At Independent Living Resources

4439 Mormon Coulee Road

*Subjects to learn more about are selected the last Thursday of the month

Past subjects include:

- Feeling Safe
- Building a Support System
- Overcoming Anxiety
- Assertiveness Skills
- Family Issues

We Share our Pain & Challenges, Hope & Recovery. Everyone's story is respected and confidential within the meeting.

For more Information call 608-787-1111

Come & Join Us to Explore, Learn, Grow, & Heal Together As "Women Supporting Women"



this issue

United Way/Women Supporting Women	P.1
Rave/Note from Michelle Olson	P.2
Peer Specialists/ Board of Directors	P.3
Act Now!	P.4
WI Loan Programs	P.6
Warming Center/ Benefit Amounts/Personal Care	P.7

Great Rivers United Way Looking for Community Input

COMPASS Now 2011 is a collaboration of partners who care about advancing the quality of life in our communities. The purpose of COMPASS NOW 2011 is to assess community needs, identify community strengths and mobilize action to improve life in the communities of La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties in Wisconsin and Houston county in Minnesota.

The COMPASS Now 2011 community assessment will officially kick-off on January 25. The assessment includes a survey of 5000 randomly selected households in the 5 counties, community member focus groups in each of the participating counties and an analysis of leading social and economic indicators.

The COMPASS NOW 2011 Community Needs Assessment Report will be released in November of this year. The information collected through the assessment process will guide the development of the road map and call to action to address the issues affecting

our communities. The COMPASS Now 2011 partnership is made up of the Great Rivers United Way, the Franciscan Skemp Healthcare Campuses in La Crosse, Arcadia, and Sparta, Gundersen Lutheran, St. Joseph's Memorial Hospital in Hillsboro, Tomah Memorial Hospital, Tri-County Memorial in Trempealeau, Vernon Memorial Hospital, and the 5 County Health Departments of La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, Vernon Counties in Wisconsin, and Houston County in Minnesota. The ultimate goal of the COMPASS Now process is to improve the quality of life for the residents throughout the five-county Great Rivers Region.

For more information, contact the COMPASS Now Project Coordinator, Diana DiazGranados at the Great Rivers United Way (608) 796-1400 or contact Independent Living Resources, Inc. (608)787-1111 if you are interested in participating in the community member focus groups.



Empowerment is published four times per year by:

Independent Living Resources, Inc.

4439 Mormon Coulee Rd
La Crosse, WI. 54601

Phone (608) 787-1111
Toll Free(888)474-5745
TTY (608)787-1148
Toll Free TTY (608)378-2198

Web Page: www.ilresources.org

Editor: Alicia Oliver
Email: Alicia.oliver@ilresources.org

FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE...

Empowerment is available in audio tape, Braille, large print, e-mail, computer disk format, or on our website in text version. Let us know your particular format needs and we will make a copy for you accordingly.

What's Rave?

A welcoming drop-in center where adults in mental health recovery go for support.

Why go?

To meet friendly, accepting people...make crafts, artwork, paint, play pool, use the internet, go to a support meeting, look for work, find resources in the community, learn about recovery opportunities, watch a movie, play cards, or anything else you'd like to do!

When is it open?

Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Who's it for?

Any adult is welcome to come to Rave, staff all have first hand experience with a mental health issue. Call us at (608) 785-9615 and we'll let you know of any activities or more information.

Upcoming Activities...

- Weekly Women's Group
- Monthly Meal
- Free Breakfast on Mondays
- Weekly Wellness and Recovery Support Group
- Job Search Assistance
- Monthly Pot Lucks
- Learn to Play Guitar



RAVE is Recovery Avenue
1806 State Street
La Crosse, WI
(608) 785-9615

"Acknowledging the good that you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance."

-Eckhart Tolle



Michelle Olson
Assistant Director

Dream Sequence:

I am in a meeting with Alicia and Kathie. I hear them talking about our upcoming newsletter and timelines to get it done. Suddenly, they both had the same thought. They say, "Michelle, how about you write something for the newsletter to let everyone know you are leaving." I panic! I shut my eyes. I open my eyes. I pinched myself. I realize this is not a dream. It is time to do this. How do you say goodbye to so many people at once? I hate saying goodbye. It makes me cry!"

Reality: So, here I am. I am not quite sure how to write this letter, but know that I must do it. I begin to write:

I am not sure if I have met everyone who reads this great Empowerment newsletter! I have met so many wonderful people during my sixteen years at Independent Living Resources! I may have met some of you in passing, worked on a committee, met at a conference, served on a Board, or met with you in your home or community. I have really made the rounds in our thirteen county service region and in the state over the years.

I want you to know that I have decided to make some personal changes, and will

be challenging myself in new ways. One of the changes I am making is in my career path, which is bittersweet for me. I am sad to announce my resignation from my position as Assistant Director with Independent Living Resources. Leaving ILR is sad because I have spent the past sixteen years growing with this agency, from its first formative years when we had an office in Shelby Mall with six staff, just trying to figure out how we could change the world (or at least our corner of it) to where we are today with a staff of over 80! My how times have changed!

It has been my privilege to come to work every day to work alongside people who are so passionate about influencing change and providing services to people who need access to information and supports to live independently. I have had the opportunity to watch so many people with disabilities find their voice and personal power and achieve independence by setting and achieving goals. My mind and heart leave ILR filled with your stories of accomplishment and will forever give me the incentive to remain persistent and never give up.

Now, on to the exciting part of my news! I am leaving Independent Living Resources to work as an Orientation Consultant with the IRIS program. This new adventure will have me working with a program that gives individuals with disabilities the opportunity to direct their own care and the funding to pay for that care. This is a perfect fit for me. I will continue to be part of the independent living movement through my work with IRIS.

Writing this letter has been quite therapeutic for me. I realize that I am not saying goodbye. I am not going anywhere

"I will continue to be part of the Independent Living movement through my work with IRIS"

far away; where people will never see me again. I will still be around. I plan on staying in touch and will continue supporting any advocacy efforts that come up. I want to thank you all for everything you have given to me over the years, your support, your trust, and your stories. You all have helped me find my direction, my personal power, my path. It has made me who I am today and I am happy to have worked alongside you for all these years.

La Crosse Winter Warming Center

Community Trainings

The winter warming center will be an overnight center for 15 adults who are homeless and do not qualify for other shelters. The center will offer a safe place to stay warm and have a hot meal. Volunteer trainings are for community members who want to volunteer for intake, overnights, or meal donations. We encourage you to come and learn more about the project.

General Volunteer Training for 1st Time Volunteers:

Dates: Tuesday Jan. 11th or Wednesday Jan. 26th
Time: 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Place: First Baptist Church
1209 Main St.

Practice Night Training for All Volunteers -we will walk you through intake and nightly activities

Date: Tuesday Jan. 25th
Time: 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Place: First Baptist Church
1209 Main St

For more information and to RSVP contact:

Kevin Solarte,
ksolarte82@lsswis.org
or 414-325-3067



Benefit Amounts for 2011

For those individuals who are receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) here are the Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) and Trail Work Period amounts for 2011. For those individuals who are working or interested in working, Independent Living Resources is excited to announce the extension of the benefits analysis grant for 2011. The agency can provide a benefits analysis on how your benefits will be affected once you work. If you are interested in a benefits analysis contact Independent Living Resources to set up an appointment.

BENEFITS QUICK REFERENCE SHEET 2011

SSI

Individual FBR	\$674.00
Couple FBR	\$1011.00
Individual FBR, Living Arrangement B	\$449.34
Break-even Point for earned income only single	\$1,433.00
State Supplement, individual	\$83.78
State Supplement, couple	\$132.05
State E-Supplement	\$95.99
State C-Supplement first child	\$250.00
each additional child	\$150.00
Student Earned Income Exclusion	
per month:	\$1,540.00
up to:	\$6,600.00 annually
1619-b Threshold	\$31,468.00
1619-b Threshold, E-Supplement	\$33,771.48

SSDI

SGA	\$1,000.00
Blind SGA	\$1,640.00
TWP	\$720.00
Quarter of Coverage	\$1,120.00
Medicare Part B premium	\$114.40

Personal Care Program Update

We have had some changes in the Personal Care Program over the past few months. We said goodbye and good luck to Annette Yoshizumi, Care Manager, in late November as she pursues new employment interests. We began the recruitment process to replace the vacancy of Care Manager and are pleased to announce the addition of our new Care Manager, Will Ward. Will comes to us with many years of experience in high quality service delivery. He is a welcome addition to our Independent Living Resources team!

The program continues to grow and we are proud of our dedicated staff who have been plowing through the snow and ice this winter to make their rounds to provide services to the consumers we serve.

If you or someone you know is in need of personal or supportive home care services please contact us at 608-793-1700 to find out more about our fee schedule.

~REMEMBER~

Hand Hygiene to Help Prevent Flu Good health habits for preventing seasonal flu include proper handwashing to help stop the spread of germs at home, work, and school.

Continued from page 3

The Board of Directors meets on the last Friday of the months of January, March, May, July, September and November. Independent Living Resources is able to reimburse for mileage costs to attend meetings which are held in La Crosse.



For more information and an application packet, contact:

Kathie Knoble-Iverson,
Executive Director
Independent Living
Resources

4439 Mormon Coulee Rd
La Crosse, WI 54601

(608) 787-1111/ Voice,
(608) 787-1148/ TTY,
(888) 474-5745/ Toll free Voice
(888) 378-2198/ Toll free TTY

Wisconsin Telework and Wisloan Loan Programs

Telework

What is the Wisconsin Telework Loan Program?

The Wisconsin Telework Loan Program is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from home or from other remote sites away from the office, such as work on the road or at a telework center.

What can I purchase with a Telework loan?

Loan funds can be used to purchase equipment, training to use equipment, extended warranties, and cost of maintenance and repairs. Are there criteria for Telework loan applications?

A telework loan is generally considered favorable if the equipment purchased with the loan assists you in doing at least one of the following:

- Begin telework for an employer where you were previously unemployed
- Increase income in an existing job through telework
- Remain employed at your current level, and prevent job loss or a reduction in earnings, through telework
- Begin working at home to accommodate your disability
- Initiate or expand home based self-employment with an approved business plan

How much can I borrow and at what interest rate and terms?

Loan amounts range from \$500 to \$50,000. You may apply for the amount you need, but the actual loan amount will depend on the item purchased and your ability to repay the loan. The interest rate is 6.5% and term lengths depend on the amount of the loan and the item purchased.

WisLoan

What is WisLoan?

WisLoan is a state-wide alternative loan program helping Wisconsin's residents with a disability to purchase assistive technology that assists them to live more independently and productively.

Who Can Apply?

Any Wisconsin resident with a disability over the age of 18 in need of assistive technology or home modifications is eligible to apply for a loan. Some examples of assistive technology include wheelchairs, hearing aids, and vehicles with modifications. In addition, loans have been approved for home modifications such as ramp construction and roll-in showers. Loan amounts range from \$500.00 to \$50,000.00, but the actual loan amount will depend on the items purchased and your ability to repay. Current

interest rate on a Wisloan is 6.5%. If you have bad credit, including bankruptcy, your application will still be considered. The focus is on the ability to make monthly payments to pay back the loan. Reasons for bad credit are taken into consideration.

The program is made possible through a grant from Title III of the Assistive Technology Act (AT Act) of 1998. The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS), Office for Persons with Physical Disabilities (OPPD) received the grant and provides programmatic and fiscal oversight. IndependenceFirst, a community-based and consumer-controlled Independent Living Center (ILC) based in Milwaukee, administers the program in partnership with Marshall & Ilsley Bank and seven other Independent Living Centers.

How to apply for a WisLoan or Telework funds?

Contact Independent Living Resources to schedule a time to meet with an Independent Living Specialist to fill out the loan application paperwork. Contact us at 608-787-1111 or at our toll free number 1-888-474-5745.



Peer Specialists – Igniting Recovery

Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialists (CPS) are important members of the mental health recovery teams for service recipients. They engage and encourage recipients by promoting wellness, independent living, and self-direction. Focusing on recovery in order to service recipients and to enhance their skills to meet their chosen goals.

Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialists work with the service recipient as recovery models because they self-identify as having mental illness and have made substantial progress in their recovery.

Peer Specialists are considered crucial to our Nation's mental health transformation. Currently CPS are employed in Independent Living Centers, Hospitals, Clinics and many other mental health support areas. By becoming a Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialist you will be "Igniting Recovery" for service recipients.

Important Note:

Applications received after the deadline date will be automatically scheduled for the next available exam. A score of 85 percent is

required to pass the exam. For specific information on certification guidelines please download the 'Wisconsin Mental Health Peer Specialist Certification Application'



Certification Exams are scheduled for the following dates:

- * Feb. 9, 2011, 8:30am - 12:30pm (application deadline: Jan. 31, 2011)
- * May 11, 2011, 8:30am -12:30pm (application deadline: May 2,2011)
- * August 3, 2011, 8:30am-12:30pm (application deadline: July 25,2011)

Independent Living Resources Announces:

Board of Directors Positions Available

The Board of Directors is the governing body of Independent Living Resources overseeing programmatic focus and financial accountability. The majority of persons on the Board of Directors are persons with disabilities.

If you are a persons with a disability or someone who has a keen interest in promoting independence, self-advocacy and choices for people with disabilities in Southwestern Wisconsin and you are a resident of the following counties:

Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Lafayette, Monroe, Richland, Sauk, Trempealeau, or Vernon counties, you are encouraged to apply.

Continued on page 4



FINALLY – A WAY TO GET INVOLVED

Be a part of a locally based advocacy network led by people with disabilities tackling difficult issues and making a difference. Act Now represents the interests of all people with disabilities. Covering the 13 counties in the southwestern corner of Wisconsin, Act Now seeks to affect change and support inclusion and respect. Anyone is Welcome!

If you have a disability or are simply interested in supporting the disability community, we need your voice.

Levels of Participation – All roles are vital to the success of the network

Be a Partner – As a partner you will be kept informed about local issues and group activities as well as state and national disability related issues through information and action alerts. This can be a great way to learn about advocacy and find out about issues that are important to you.

Be an Advocate – In addition to receiving information and action alerts, advocates will be invited to join regional group meetings

where we work together to develop advocacy skills through training and action in order to address local disability related issues.

Be a Regional Contact – As a regional contact you will be included in both the partner and advocate level activities and you will assist with the coordination and facilitation of regional meetings; keep regional advocates updated on relevant disability related issues. For this roll, e-mail and internet access are required.

CUT HERE

How to Join

Fill out this form and return it to Independent Living Resources or contact Cathryn at cathryn.scott@ilresources.org or 608-647-8053.

Name	
Street Address	
City, State and Zip Code	
Home Phone	
Work Phone	
E-Mail Address	
Circle your choice:	REGIONAL CONTACT (e-mail required) ADVOCATE PARTNER

Thanks for your interest in Act Now!



For Persons with Disabilities in Western Wisconsin

Place
Stamp
Here

Mail To: Independent Living Resources
Attn: Cathryn
149 E. Mill St.
Richland Center, WI 53581