

LEAGUE OF HUMAN DIGNITY

ON THE LEVEL

APRIL 2006/MAY 2006

(DESCRIPTIVE TEXT VERSION)

WWW.LEAGUEOFHUMANDIGNITY.COM & WWW.MOBILITY-OPTIONS.COM

(The League of Human Dignity logo features the capital letter “H” (royal blue) with a larger size capital “D” (white) behind it. A thick white arrow pointing upward forms the center of the “H.” The words “League of Human Dignity” (black) appear to the left of the symbol.)

ON THE LEVEL is the bimonthly newsletter of the League of Human Dignity, Inc.

The League of Human Dignity is a consumer based nonprofit organization, whose purpose is to promote the full integration of persons with disabilities into society. To this end, we will advocate their needs and rights, while providing quality service to assist them in becoming and remaining independent citizens.

Established in 1971, the League now serves consumers in 62 counties throughout Nebraska and Southwest Iowa through our Centers for Independent Living in Lincoln, Norfolk, Omaha, and Council Bluffs; our Panhandle Medicaid Waiver Office in Scottsbluff; and our Mobility Options shop in Lincoln.

ON THE LEVEL is available in Braille and on audio cassette. To request these formats, contact the Public Information Office in Lincoln, or the League of Human Dignity in your area. For information on display advertising, please contact Public Information. Classified ads are also available.

To provide support group listings, news releases, or other information contact: Editor, ON THE LEVEL, League of Human Dignity, 1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508; (402) 441-7871 Voice/TDD; FAX: (402) 441-7650; or info@leagueofhumandignity.com.

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Mike Schafer, CEO and Michelle Martin, Editor

LEAGUE OF HUMAN DIGNITY

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PANHANDLE
Medicaid Waiver Office
17 E 21 ST #2
Scottsbluff, NE 69361
(308) 632-0470

STARS AND STRIDES 2006

Make plans to join us Friday, April 21st as we host our 6th Annual Southwest Iowa/Omaha Benefit Auction at Ameristar Casino & Hotel in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The fun begins when the doors open at 5:30 p.m.

There will be many things happening during the evening. You might want to start by grabbing a drink and checking out the array of auction items up for bids. We will have several silent auctions during the night as well as a live auction. The scrumptious buffet will begin at 6:30p.m. which should leave you just enough time to check out all of the prizes.

There will be something for everyone to appreciate: jewelry, electronics equipment, birthday parties, gift baskets, certificates for food and other items, and so much more. One of the most coveted prizes will most assuredly be a unique display of uncut \$2 bills signed by Warren Buffet.

Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased by calling (712) 323-6863 (V/TDD) or (402) 595-1256 (V/TDD). Tickets must be purchased seven days prior to the event, so make the call now you won't want to miss this fun event.

All proceeds from this auction will benefit the League of Human Dignity and our work to assist people with disabilities to fully integrate into society. For more information on the League, please check out www.leagueofhumandignity.com.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Each edition of this newsletter I try to use this space to highlight something important to the League of Human Dignity and/or to the Independent-Living Movement. I want to share what we have been working on and what we have been able to accomplish. I want you to know that we are trying to help people with disabilities live more independent lives, and we support and encourage your efforts to gain more freedom. However this time I am asking for your help, your support.

Each spring we host a fundraising auction to benefit our Southwest Iowa and Omaha Centers for Independent Living. This is the only fundraiser we host to benefit these Centers and we think it is a worthwhile and fun way to raise money to support independent living.

This year we are hosting the auction on Friday, April 21. It will be held at Ameristar Casino & Hotel in Council Bluffs, and looks to be a night of fun. There really will be something for everyone to bid on. The auction committee has worked feverishly to secure such auction items as a Nascar Weekend at Kansas Motor Speedway, carpet and upholstery cleaning,

gorgeous pearl necklaces, movie passes, a “Day of Beauty”, and a Football Legends Football, just to mention a few of the items.

Tickets are only \$35 which includes a buffet dinner, drinks, several silent auctions and the main event, the live auction. This is an excellent way to support our mission and to enjoy an evening out all at the same time. We would love to see our friends out in full force. Please call either the Omaha or Southwest Iowa CIL to purchase tickets. Come enjoy the Stars and the Strides.

Mike Schafer
Chief Executive Officer
League Of Human Dignity

MISC. MISC. MISC. MISC. MISC.

FILM TO RAISE AWARENESS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN LINCOLN

Numerous community organizations and businesses have come together to show an Academy Award®-nominated film, *The Collector of Bedford Street*, in Lincoln on March 30, 2006, at Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center, 313 N. 13th Street . The screening, scheduled for 7 p.m., will be followed by a discussion with Alice Elliott, the film’s director, and Larry Selman, the film’s subject, and a reception. The event coincides with National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

The Collector of Bedford Street is a short documentary film about Selman, a community activist and a fundraiser who lives independently with an intellectual disability. Every year Selman collects thousands of dollars for charity, but he lives at the poverty level himself. During the filming, Elliott became concerned about Selman’s future. His 83 year old uncle brought Selman meals three times a week, but there was no other family member in his life. When the neighbors learned how fragile Selman’s safety net was, they wanted to find a long term solution that would keep Selman in his apartment and part of the community. Because of his years of service to his New York neighborhood, the block association and others created an Adult Supplemental Needs Trust Fund for him. This was the first time that a group, rather than an individual’s family, has created such a fund. The film humanizes the story behind the abstract statistics of developmental disability, shedding light on how a community builds tolerance, understanding and inclusion.

The Collector of Bedford Street appeared in more than 60 film festivals and has also won 19 awards. Tickets to the event are available for \$10 by calling toll-free 877.366.7242 x1107.

TRANSPORTATION FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

AGENCY: Department of Transportation

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking

SUMMARY: The Department is proposing to amend its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 regulations to update requirements concerning rail station platforms, clarify that public transit providers are required to make modifications to policies and practices to ensure that their programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities, and codify the Department’s practice concerning the issuance of guidance on disability matters.

Comment Closing Date: Comments should be submitted by April 28, 2006 for the proposed regulatory changes in this notice. Comments should be submitted by May 30, 2006 for responses to the seven items under the heading “Request for Comment on Other Issues.” Late-filed comments will be considered to the extent practicable. For more information, visit the Federal

Register notice at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/06-1658.htm> (If the link doesn't work from this message, copy it and paste it into your web browser's address window)

GOING TO WORK FORUMS TO BE HELD ACROSS NEBRASKA

Franklin, Neb. -- The Kolb Foundation for Disability Education will present a "Going to Work" forum in Nebraska each Tuesday in April to explore and highlight employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

People with disabilities who wish to explore employment options are encouraged to attend one of the forums, which are titled: "Going to Work: Disability and Business, a Winning Combination." The forums will include a panel of people with disabilities who have been successfully employed by using work incentives, such as Ticket to Work; presentations about various resources available to people with disabilities who want to pursue competitive employment; and presentations by local business leaders who have made hiring people with disabilities a standard practice.

"Our goal is to provide opportunities for people with disabilities to learn about different options available in order to see whether employment is feasible," said Tim Kolb, CEO and Executive Director of the Kolb Foundation for Disability Education. "People with disabilities make up a significant, untapped potential labor pool that can benefit businesses across Nebraska, and it's important that this group explores every option available.

The dates of the Going to Work Forum are:

April 4th in Omaha, Neb.; April 11th in Kearney, Neb.; April 18th in North Platte, Neb.; and April 25th in Scottsbluff, Neb. To register (please do it asap) go to www.nebraskatickettowork.org or KFDE@frontiernet.net.

MONEY FOLLOWS THE PERSON IS PASSED

What is it? H.R. 3063....Money Follows the Person

What it means? Quite simply it means having a real choice for a lot of people who have never been given a choice before. A choice of where to live and how to live. A choice for who will provide services to them. So many choices.

Disability advocates across the nation are celebrating a victory because the day after Valentines Day, Money Follows the Person was passed. It is just a small part of recently passed federal legislation that will help people who want to move out of nursing homes and other institutions and instead receive services in the community.

All too often people with disabilities of all ages, from children to adults and on up to seniors, wind up having to go to a nursing home or other institution because they either do not hear about community-based support services, or the waiting lists are far too long. People with all kinds of disabilities, regardless of age and all degrees of disability, live well in the community. What is the key factor for success? The right services and supports.

"Free, free at last! There is nothing to compare being locked up to being free" said James Templeton. "It's like being in jail, but in an institution you don't know if you will ever get out. I spent 30 years inside and then I didn't get better, I just got out. Now my life is my own."

Lack of funding for community-based services is one of the main reasons waiting lists for community services are so long. But now, by listening to people with disabilities, the government has figured out how these services can be provided without additional costs. The

money that pays for the person's services in the nursing home or other institution can be used instead to pay for their services in the community, hence the name Money Follows the Person.

Ironically, the cost of community-based services is, on average, about two-thirds the cost of the equivalent institutional services. The idea is so simple it took a while to take hold, but now we have a Medicaid reform that not only is more economical, it also gives people choice!

In 2007, under the federal Money Follows the Person initiative, states can apply to CMS (the federal Medicaid agency) and over the course of the next five years, about 40 states will be selected to receive a better federal match (FMAP) for this initiative. Using Money Follows the Person, for the first year a person moves out onto community services, the federal government will cover a higher percent of the cost of their services and states will pay a smaller portion. After that first year the match rate will return to the regular rate, but even this can save the state money. The enhanced rate, which is set state by state using the SCHIP formula, would be between 12% and 25% higher than the regular Federal match rate, depending on the state.

It is often said that home is where the heart is. Across the nation 287,098 or 20.5% of all people in nursing homes have said they would rather live in the community. For them, and perhaps others, Money Follows the Person is the best valentine they could receive.

We want to alert the Governors and state legislatures and challenge them to take full advantage of this initiative and apply with CMS as soon as possible! (from ADAPT)

GRANTS NOW AVAILABLE

Barrier Removal Grants are now available to qualified renters or homeowners who experience a mobility limitation (or have someone in their family who does). The program is offered in Lincoln/Lancaster County, Omaha and Council Bluffs, and is open to people who have low to moderate incomes and need funds to remove or modify barriers in their homes.

A few modifications that may be considered eligible under the program include: outside ramps and lifts, grab bars, handrails, wider doorways, accessible tubs and showers, and reachable sinks and counters.

Applications for the grants are available at the Lincoln, Omaha, and Council Bluffs Centers for Independent Living.

LINCOLN

Center for Independent Living
1701 P Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 441-7871

SOUTHWEST IOWA

Center for Independent Living
1520 Avenue M
Council Bluffs, IA 51501
(712) 323-6863

OMAHA

Center for Independent Living
5513 Center Street
Omaha, NE 68106
(402) 595-1256

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

JANUARY 6, 2006 - MARCH 15, 2006

BUILDER (\$500 AND ABOVE)

Lester Electrical,
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska,
John McGill

SUPPORTER (\$250 - \$499)

Great Plains Auto Body,
Woodmen of the World,
Joyce Busch,
Lozier Corporation

CENTURY (\$100 - \$249)

Dale L. Young,
George W. Underwood,
Kenneth Henkens,
Physicians Mutual Insurance Co.,
Ann Rawley,

Holland Basham Architects

Believer (\$50 - \$99)

Hugh Genoways,
Elaine Bills

FRIEND (\$25 - \$49)

Robert Zeman,
Bushman Floor Covering,
Denise Wiemer

OTHER

Edith Buckmaster,
Larry Klein

WHO'S SAYING HELLO...

Marilyn Kreifels,
Services Coordinator, Omaha

WHO'S SAYING GOODBYE...

Kristin Johnson,
Services Coordinator, Lincoln

Valerie Knaub,
Administrative Assistant, Lincoln

OF LOCAL INTEREST

Madonna Adaptive Sports and Recreation program offers opportunities for individuals with activity limitations to participate in a new sport or get back into the one they enjoyed in the past.

The program provides open practice times on a monthly basis and workshops periodically. Instructions and adaptive equipment are available for each sport.

For more information on upcoming activities or to be on the sports and recreation mailing list, please contact Ian Thompson at (402) 486-8449 or ithompson@madonna.org.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE UPDATES
FEDERAL COURT ORDERS AMC MOVIE THEATER CHAIN TO IMPROVE
WHEELCHAIR SEATING AT AMC THEATERS NATIONWIDE

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On January 11, the Justice Department announced the resolution of a lawsuit against American Multi-Cinema, Inc. and AMC Entertainment Inc., operators of one of the nation's largest chains of movie theaters, filed under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). On January 10, Judge Florence-Marie Cooper of the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California ordered AMC to remedy violations at AMC movie theaters that do not provide access to the stadium section for seating for individuals who use wheelchairs.

“Providing the same movie going experience for individuals in wheelchairs that other patrons enjoy delivers on the promise of the ADA,” said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. “These improvements will make the goals of the ADA a reality for thousands of Americans who want to enjoy this popular form of entertainment.”

The ADA requires places of public accommodation, such as movie theaters, to provide equal access to persons with disabilities and prevents them from providing persons with disabilities a lower quality of goods and services than they provide other members of the general public. The court's decision requires AMC to improve wheelchair seating at approximately 1,200 of AMC's 1,933 stadium style auditoriums, which includes providing ramps in over 360 auditoriums. The order also requires AMC theaters built in the next five years to comply with Justice Department guidance on ADA new construction requirements. In addition, AMC is ordered to pay \$200,000 in damages to complainants who notified the Justice Department about problems with wheelchair access at AMC theaters. Finally, AMC is ordered to pay \$100,000 in civil penalties for violation of the ADA.

The lawsuit filed in 1999 in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, alleged that the companies violated the ADA by denying movie-goers who use wheelchairs equal access to the stadium-style seating section at new movie theaters. In 2002, the court held AMC in violation of the ADA for failing to provide comparable lines of sight for patrons who use wheelchairs in AMC stadium-style theaters. In those theaters, seats are placed on risers at newly constructed theaters to provide unobstructed views with improved viewing angles. Except in AMC's largest auditoriums, patrons who use wheelchairs cannot generally get to the preferred seating area that is located on risers and accessed by stairs. In January 2003, the Court also held AMC in violation of ADA requirements for elements including entrances, exits, bathrooms, and concession stands that failed to meet ADA requirements.

The Department has achieved a successful record of making stadium-style movie theaters more accessible. The Justice Department recently negotiated consent orders with Cinemark USA, Inc., and with Regal Entertainment Group, to improve accessibility. On January 9, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts also reached an agreement with National Amusements Inc., a movie theater chain based in Massachusetts, to improve wheelchair seating throughout its chain.

IN OTHER NEWS:

On March 1, the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice filed suit against the State of New York for what the Division considers to be the significant failure by the State to comply with disability-related provisions of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). In spite of repeated attempts to encourage voluntary compliance, the alleged absence of any

meaningful effort by the State of New York to comply with HAVA has left us with little choice but to resort to litigation. In undertaking this action, the first of its kind thus far, we intend to send a strong and clear message to the nation that we take voting accessibility for people with disabilities very seriously and are prepared to work to hold jurisdictions accountable for failure to do what the law requires. We assert that, in accordance with federal law, people with disabilities rightfully deserve to have the same degree of access to the polling place as those without disabilities.

For far too long, members of the disability community have remained excluded from equal and effective participation in the voting process. This must change, and the Justice Department will continue to help ensure that the law is appropriately and meaningfully carried out.

IN OTHER NEWS:

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Justice Department today announced a settlement agreement with past and current owners of Huntsville Speedway, resolving an investigation into allegations that the race track is inaccessible to spectators and racers with disabilities, in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“I applaud the owners of Huntsville Speedway for working cooperatively with us to ensure that persons with disabilities will have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy all of the activities offered there,” said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division.

Under the agreement, the owners of Huntsville Speedway have agreed to:

- * Make physical modifications to Huntsville Speedway so that parking, ticket counters, toilet rooms for spectators and racers, spectator seating, and routes to spectator seating are accessible to people with disabilities;
- * Provide patrons seated in wheelchair seating areas with waiter/waitress service for concessions purposes during all scheduled events and provide an accessible concessions counter for racers; and
- * Pay monetary relief to the two individuals whose complaints prompted the Justice Department’s investigation. The settlement agreement will remain in effect for three years.

People interested in finding out more about the ADA or the agreement can call the Justice Department’s toll-free ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 or (800) 514-0383 (TTY), or access its ADA website at www.ada.gov.

THE LEAGUE OF HUMAN DIGNITY RURAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Is now taking applications for a 1-bedroom apartment in York and a 2-bedroom apartment in York.

The units come with a Section 8 certificate, and rent is based on income.

Eligible persons must qualify under income guidelines as established by the U.S. Dept. of HUD. Applicants must have a disability to qualify.

Contact Paula Shufeldt at 1 (888) 508-4758 voice/TDD pshufeldt@leagueofhumandignity.com

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT

1967 - The National Theatre of the Deaf is founded with a grant from the federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.

1968 - The Architectural Barriers Act is passed, mandating that federally constructed buildings

and facilities be accessible to people with physical disabilities. This act is generally considered to be the first ever-federal disability rights legislation.

1969 - Niels Erik Bank-Mikkelsen from Denmark and Bengt Nirje from Sweden introduce the concept of normalization to an American audience at a conference sponsored by the President's Committee on Mental Retardation, helping to provide the conceptual framework for deinstitutionalization. Their remarks, and those of others, are published in *Changing Patterns in Services for the Mentally Retarded*.

Silent News is founded by Julius and Harriet Wiggins as a newspaper for deaf people.

1970 - The Insane Liberation Front is organized in Portland, Oregon.

The Developmental Disabilities Services and Facilities Construction Amendments are passed. They contain the first legal definition of developmental disabilities and authorize grants for services and facilities for the rehabilitation of people with developmental disabilities and state "DD Councils."

Nursing home resident Max Starkloff founds Paraquad in St Louis.

Disabled in Action is founded in New York City by Judith Heumann, after her successful employment discrimination suit against the city's public school system. With chapters in several other cities, it organizes demonstrations and files litigation on behalf of disability rights.

The Physically Disabled Students Program (PDSP) is founded by Ed Roberts, John Hessler, Hale Zukas, and others at the University of California at Berkeley. With its provisions for community living, political advocacy, and personal assistance services, it becomes the nucleus for the first Center for Independent Living, founded two years later.

Congress passes the Urban Mass Transportation Assistance Act, declaring it a "national policy that elderly and handicapped persons have the same right as other persons to utilize mass transportation facilities and services." Passage of the act has little impact, however, as the law contains no provision for enforcement.

1971 - The Mental Patients' Liberation Front is founded in Boston, and the Mental Patients' Liberation Project is founded in New York City.

The National Center for Law and the Handicapped is founded at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, becoming the first legal advocacy center for people with disabilities in the United States.

The U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama hands down its first decision in *Wyatt v. Stickney*, ruling that people in residential state schools and institutions have a constitutional right "to receive such individual treatment as (would) give them a realistic opportunity to be cured or to improve his or her mental condition." Disabled people can no longer simply be locked away in "custodial institutions" without treatment or education. This decision is a crucial victory in the struggle for deinstitutionalization.

The Caption Center is founded at WGBH Public Television in Boston, and it begins providing captioned programming for deaf viewers.

The Fair Labor Standard Act of 1938 is amended to bring people with disabilities other than blindness into the sheltered workshop system. This measure leads to the establishment, in coming years, of an enormous sheltered workshop system for people with cognitive and developmental disabilities.

-- to be continued in next newsletter

HOTLINE FOR DISABILITY SERVICES

Persons with disabilities and their families often need to work with a variety of

community and state agencies in order to get the services and supports they need. Navigating through these services and supports can often be complicated and confusing. In addition to the Information and Referral provided at the League of Human Dignity, in Nebraska there is also a program that helps answer questions and find resources.

The Hotline for Disability Services provides information and referral services to Nebraskans who have questions or concerns related to a disability. This includes information about services available in a certain area, transportation, special parking permits, legal rights, and any other questions related to a disability.

Experienced Hotline staff are available to answer questions and provide information regarding resources for persons with disabilities. Questions may be answered by telephone or e-mail, and other information may be obtained by accessing the Hotline's website.

The Hotline for Disability Services website provides general agency and program information regarding services for persons with disabilities. The site may be searched by entering an agency name or by selecting a category, service, county, city, age or disability.

Interested individuals may call the Hotline toll-free at 800.742.7594. Questions for the Hotline may also be sent by e-mail to shari.bahensky@cap.ne.gov. The website for the Hotline can be accessed at: www.cap.state.ne.us.

INTERPREK

Interpretek is pleased to announce the addition of community sign language interpreting services and coordination to its existing operations. As many of you know, Interpretek currently employs both full and part time staff interpreters who provide video relay interpreting services at CSD's Omaha, Nebraska Call Center. In an effort to assist NCDHH, local interpreters, and agencies in meeting the ever increasing referral service. Interpretek will depend heavily on the local independent interpreter practitioners to cover requests. With decades of interpreting scheduling experience, Interpretek looks forward to collaborating with local interpreters, consumers, and service providers to increase the coverage of a wide array of interpreting assignments across Nebraska.

Interpretek is pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Anndee Rae Brandyberry to the position of Regional Director of the Omaha, Nebraska office. Anndee Rae has been a local certified interpreter for several years, and more recently, a full time video relay interpreter in the Omaha Call Center. She brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the position and together with her teammates will offer tremendous leadership and commitment to working with local interpreters to satisfy requests for interpreting services.

If you are an interpreter and would like to work through Interpretek as part of your practice, please contact them at (402) 650-3865 or abrandyberry@interpretek.com. If you are a requester who needs the services of a sign language interpreter, please contact Interpretek and let them know how they might be of service. Interpretek welcomes all inquiries.

The League of Human Dignity's Southwest Iowa Center for Independent Living has been working with several other agencies, including the University of Iowa Center for Disabilities and Development, to gather information about recent legislation that was passed in Iowa. On Friday, February 17th, the League hosted a consumer input session. Read on for what has taken place so far.

IOWACARE: REBALANCING FOR INCREASED COMMUNITY CAPACITY, ACCESS, AND CHOICE

The IowaCare Act (HF 841), passed in the FY 05 legislative session, is best known for expanding limited Medicaid coverage to adults with incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty level. However, the act has equally important provisions to “rebalance” Iowa’s system of long term supports for older Iowans and people with disabilities by improving access, expanding choices about where and how to get services, and building the capacity of Iowa communities to sustain independent living for people.

The Act builds on important on-going efforts to redesign Iowa’s service system for people who need long term supports: the work of the MH/MR/DD/BI Commission on redesign of the adult and children’s disability service system, initiatives to improve consumer and provider access to information and referral services (especially those in support of community living), efforts to streamline needs assessment and eligibility determination, assistance institutions in diversifying services, etc. Information on these initiatives is contained in the System Readiness Assessment found at [http://www.ime.state.ia.us/docs/Part1-SRARRevisions\(9-29\).doc](http://www.ime.state.ia.us/docs/Part1-SRARRevisions(9-29).doc)

The Readiness Assessment is contained in Iowa’s successful FY 2005 application to CMS for a \$2.3 million Real Choice Systems Transformation grant. The principal purpose of the grant is to provide financial and technical support for implementation of the rebalancing provisions of the IowaCare Act. CMS, the Iowa Legislature, and the Administration all recognize that system redesign is multi-faceted and will take years to accomplish. Many components will require extensive inter-agency collaboration, and some will require legislative approval. The grant provides funding for planning, analysis, and policy and program development. It also provides funding to secure the on-going involvement of stakeholders, including consumers, their families, and anyone with a stake in Iowa’s system of long term care. This involvement is essential to effective planning and consensus building for systems change. IME has scheduled a series of public meetings to secure input; these are augmented by outreach efforts by the University of Iowa’s Center for Disabilities and Development, under contract with IME.

The provisions of the Real Choice Systems Transformation (RCST) grant do not align precisely with those of the IowaCare Act. Some IowaCare provisions do not require grant support, and the grant contains some initiatives that relate to the purposes of the Act but are not specifically mentioned in it. A summary of grant initiatives follows:

I. Improving Access.

(a) The Iowa Department of Elder Affairs, with funding through its Aging and Disability Resource Center grant, is leading a multi-agency collaborative with funding from a variety of other sources, to create a “no wrong door” web-based information and referral system for Iowans who find themselves needing services at any point in their lives. The system will use sophisticated software capable of engaging with the user interactively, to refine the object of the web search in order to address his or her very specific needs. The collaborative will link several existing information and referral networks, and strengthen them by expanding databases and ensuring regular updating. The RCST grant will fund the installation of “eligibility calculator” software in the system that will help consumers and professionals determine potential eligibility for a wide range of services, from HCBS waivers to Food Stamps. Inter-agency agreements to share client common data fields will enable the system to calculate potential eligibility quickly, without requiring re-entry of personal data over and over.

(b) It is important that anyone who plays a key role assisting consumers and family members to access long term care have access to accurate information about available services, especially

services which help maintain community living. The grant work plan calls for training hospital discharge planners and other health professionals to provide better information and supports to consumers at risk of unnecessary institutionalization.

(c) The RCST grant will support further steps to streamline eligibility and assessment through the establishment of a work group to examine other factors (besides technology) contributing to delays or inefficiencies in eligibility and assessment.

II. More Effective Management of Funding for Long Term Community Supports

(a) The grant will fund a study of the current reimbursement for Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded and for home and community based services, and development of a case sensitive reimbursement methodology similar to what has been implemented for nursing home care in Iowa.

(b) The grant will support development of the plan for expanding home and community based services in Iowa, which is due to the Legislature in July, 2007. Closely linked to this initiative is the development of mechanisms to ensure the availability of technical assistance and support to institutional providers seeking to offer home and community based services. The grant will also support research and analysis of the feasibility of a managed long term care system in Iowa.

(c) The grant will support analysis of the use of electronic medical records to improve care for people with complex health needs, and by reviewing the quality of health care for people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

(d) The grant will support the development of a statewide brokerage system to enhance coordination of and improve access to Medicaid-funded transportation services.

III. Improving Access to Affordable and Accessible Housing

(a) A "Housing Registry," statewide database of accessible housing will be developed by the Iowa Finance Authority and linked to the web-based I & R system described above.

(b) The IFA will also provide training to community organizations to assist older Iowans and people with disabilities in securing the housing they need, through information on housing assistance programs, and help with the housing search, landlord relations, etc.

The following is a sample of the questions and topics that were covered at the consumer input gathering.

Access to services.

1. How do you get information about the disability services you need? What problems do you run into trying to get good information?
2. Would you use the Internet to get information about services? Why or why not?
3. Have you (or a family member) ever been released from the hospital needing more care and assistance than your family could provide? How did you or your family member get that help—from a nursing home, or at home through an agency? Were you satisfied with the help you got?

Consumer choice.

1. Describe the kind of services you need and want right now in order to maintain your quality of life. What services will you need in the future?
2. Are you able to get those services? If you are not able to get them, how does that affect your life? What kind of barriers do you face in achieving your personal goals?

Transportation and housing

1. Where did you go to get information about your housing options? Were the sources you used in your search helpful or not? Could you get the information you wanted on the

accessibility of available housing units?

2. If you wanted to look up information on the Internet about affordable and accessible housing in your area, what kind of information would be helpful to you?

3. What experiences have you had in dealing with landlords regarding your need for accessibility?

ASSOCIATIONS AND SUPPORT GROUPS YOU CAN COUNT ON WHEN YOU NEED SOMEONE WHO UNDERSTANDS

The information listed here has been shared with the League of Human Dignity by individuals and organizations involved in local, regional and national associations and support groups.

Please let us know if you would like to add a listing.

PLEASE HELP KEEP US UPDATED: For corrections, additions or special announcements, contact Michelle in Public Information, League of Human Dignity, 1701 P St, Lincoln, NE 68508; 402- 441-7871 (V/TDD); FAX 441-7650; mmartin@leagueofhumandignity.com

ADVOCACY

EAD-Equal Access for the Disabled, meets 1st Monday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at the Council Bluffs, IA, 6th St & 9th Ave. Contact Pat Butler, President (712-323-1894) or Gloria, Secretary (712-323-3438).

ALS

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) (Lou Gehrig's Disease) Support Group (MDA), Omaha, 7602 Pacific St., Suite 200, 68114 Jessi Thomsen,(402) 390-2914.

Nebraska Office, Shaker Place, 10730 Pacific, Ste 228, Omaha, NE 68114, 402-991-8788, 1-866-762-6361; FAX: 402-991-3691, Keith Worthington Chapter; 8340 Mission Rd., Ste B4, Prairie Village, Kansas 66206, 913-648-2062

ALZHEIMERS

Cass Co. Iowa, 2nd Thursday, call Alan & Kathy Teel, 712-243-9835.

Alzheimers Association of Lincoln/Great Plains Chapter, regular meeting is the 1st Monday of each mo. at 7 pm, Karen (402) 420-2540, Toll-Free 1-800-487-2585.

Omaha/Eastern Nebraska/SW Iowa (402) 572-3010, 1-800-309-2112.

Fremont Co. in Sidney, IA, 4th Monday each mo. at 7pm, Sidney presbyterian Church, 1000 Illinois St, call Faye at 712-374-2433.

Harrison Co., Missouri Valley, last Tues of each mo. at 3 pm, Longview Home, call Evonne at 712-642-2264.

Page Co. in Clarinda, 3rd Thursday of each mo. at 2:30 pm, Goldenrod Facility, call Linda at 712-542-5621.

Scottsbluff 1st Thursday of each mo., Beverly Healthcare, 111 W. 36 St, Stacy Rotherham (308) 635-2019.

Council Bluffs, last Tuesday of each mo. at 6:30 pm at Bethany Lutheran Home, 712-572-3059.

Shelby Co. in Harlan, 3rd Wednesday each mo. at 6:30 pm at Harlan Senior Center, call Alice at 712-755-2757.

AMPUTEE

United Support for Amputees, Omaha Emmanuel Hospital Rehabilitation Center, 3rd Tuesday of each month, Maxine, (712) 644-2955, after 7 pm.

Beyond Limbloss, Lincoln, Kenny, (402) 466-0268, cell 540-0748

ARTHRITIS

Arthritis Foundation, Nebraska Chapter 402-330-6130 (within Omaha) and 800-642-5292

(outside Omaha) FAX: 402-330-6167

The web site remains the same (www.arthritis.org).

Arthritis Foundation Iowa Chapter, Des Moines, meets monthly, 515-278-0636; FAX: 515-278-2636; Info.ia@arthritis.org; www.arthritis.org

ATHLETICS

Cornhusker Wheelchair Athletics Ass'n Lincoln Ian (402) 486-8449, www.cwaane.org

Eastern Nebraska Wheelchair Athletic Association, Omaha, Greg (402) 289-3521.

Junior Wheelchair Basketball Team, Omaha, Mike (402) 554-2539; Rita (402) 551-4598.

AUTISM

Autism Society of Nebraska, Jean McDermott (402) 431-0166

Families for Early Autism Treatment (FEAT) of Nebraska, Mark Hirschfeld (402) 955-1780

Unlocking Autism, Connie Shockley (402) 933-2565

BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED

C-Big (Council Bluffs Blind Information Group) Chuck Dietz (712) 323-4817.

United Blind of Omaha, Gary 402-455-4116, Sherry 556-4156.

Support Groups for the Visually Impaired Albion, Center, Columbus, Norfolk, Tekamah, Westpoint, John/Glen 402- 370-3436.

Support Groups for the Visually Impaired in Iowa, Iowa Department for the Blind 1-800-362-2587

VIPS Support Groups for visually impaired; over 1000 members throughout Nebraska; to find your group, contact: President Howard Simons, Isanders Group, 324 W 13 St, Grand Island, NE 68801; 308-381-8003.

CANCER

American Cancer Society, Heartland Division (Omaha Office) 402-393-5800; 1-800-642-8116

PLEASE CALL FOR SUPPORT GROUPS IN OMAHA AND SURROUNDING AREAS

Lincoln, Thursdays, 6-7:30 pm Nebraska Union Rm 338. Call Yasmin (402) 472-7450.

Lincoln; Corporate Building, 7441 O St., Suite 301. "Breast Cancer Support Group" and "Look Good Feel Good" meetings will be held on 1st or 2nd Wednesday of the month. Call Mary at 402-486-7258.

Montgomery Co. in Red Oak, Breast Cancer group, meet monthly at Montgomery County Memorial Hospital, 4th Monday of mo at 6:30 pm, call Carla at 712-623-7215.

Shelby Co. in Harlan, at Myrtue Memorial Hospital, 4th Monday of the month at 6:30 pm, call Cheryl at 712-755-5161.

CHRONIC PAIN

Lincoln Chapter, American Chronic Pain Association, 1st & 3rd Tues each month, 7-8:30 pm, 1st Step Recovery & Wellness Center, 2231 Winthrop Rd. Call Chapter President Terrance Dukes (402) 423-9405.

DEAF

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH) 4600 Valley Rd, Ste 420; 402-471-3593 or 1-800-545-6244.

Communication Service for Deaf of Iowa, employment services (712) 322-1489.

Deaf Services Commission of Iowa. 1-888-221-3724 V/TTY.

DEPRESSION

Manic Depressive and Depressive Association, Lincoln, (402) 483-8886.

Greater Omaha Depression & Manic Depression Association, Omaha, Kate (402) 551-3275.

Depression/Bipolar Support Alliance-Lincoln, 1st Tues each month, 7 p.m., call 402-481-5320.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The ARC of Lincoln/Lancaster County; Individual & Family Support Services; Dads Groups; Sibshops; Family Gatherings; Vacation Program; Group Residences; 1101 Arapahoe, Suite 5, (402) 421-8866; www.lincolnne.com/nonprofit/arc

Easter Seal Nebraska provides services to children & adults with disabilities & other special needs, as well as support to their families. Call 800-650-9880/ www.ne.easterseals.com.

Mosaic: at Bethpage Village, 1044 23rd Rd, PO Box 67, Axtell, NE 68924, (308) 743-2401, Mosaic_Axtell@mosaicinfo.org; 722 S. 12th; Box 607; Beatrice, NE 68310; (402) 223-4066.

DIABETES

American Diabetes Association
(800) 342-2383.

Cass Co, 2nd Wednesday every other mo. at 6:30 pm, call Marcia at 712-243-3250.

Lincoln Diabetes Center: (402) 481-3055.

Page Co., 4th Monday at 6:30 pm, call Elaine at 712-542-2176.

Pottawattamie Co., 3rd Tues. at 5:30 pm, call Cheryl 712-755-4316.

Shelby Co., 3rd Monday at 1:30 pm, March - Nov, call Jan at 712-755-4316.

DOWN SYNDROME

Omaha Nat'l Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) Neb. Affiliate; Contact 402-553-5335 or nebuddywalk@cox.net

Lincoln, NE Parent and family group; meetings, holiday events, Buddy Walk, parent packets, Call: Deb Safarik: 402-466-7641

Lincoln Early Devel. Services Coordination 402-441-6710

Early Development Network in Lancaster County; ESU #6, 1-800-327-0091

National Down Syndrome Society 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012, 1-800-221-4602, info@ndss.org

Council Bluffs Down Syndrome Parent Group, Kyla Alba at 712-366-0503 x257 or 712-322-9391.

DYSLEXIA

Nebraska Branch International Dyslexia Association, "Smart Kids: School Problems" Grand Island, Brenda (308) 381-8943.

Lincoln, Irene (402) 327-0751.

EPILEPSY

Epilepsy Association of Nebraska, Omaha (402) 553-6567.

Epilepsy Support Group, meets third Tuesday each month in Omaha, Wittson Hall on the UNMC campus, Room 3010.

FIBROMYALGIA

Omaha, Arthritis Foundation (402) 572-3040.

Gordon area, meets in various pla

Humbolt, IA area, call Judy at 515-332-3376 (9 am-9 pm); bjmerris@goldfieldaccess.net

Mercy Medical Center, New Hampton, IA area, meets monthly, call Judy 641-394-3106 ext 189.

Page Co., 2nd Monday at 5:00 p.m. Call Shelly at 712-542-2176.

Shenandoah, IA area, meets four times a year or when requested, call Della 712-246-3244; delsta@netins.net

FMS-CF SYNDROME

Support Group, Council Bluffs. Call (712) 323-9448.

GRIEF RESOLUTION

With Horizon Hospice, Monday evenings, (402) 474-3600. Lincoln

HARD OF HEARING

S.H.H.H. – Lincoln, 7 P.M. New Covenant Church, 3rd Thursday of each month, call (402) 471-3593.

HEAD INJURY

Head Injury Support Group, Lincoln, Jan Lingren, 2nd Tuesday at 7 pm, First United Methodist Church (402) 488-1916.

Head Injury Survivors Group, 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 pm at Goodwill Industries, Lincoln (402) 231-1933.

Head Injury Support Group, Omaha, Gail Kerwin (402) 571-5651.

Head Injury Support Group, Norfolk, 1st Monday, Faith Regional Health Services.

HYDRANENCEPHALY

Omaha Local contact: Lynne (402) 485-2229 or rtrease@nntc.net; Internet support also available (please call for more information)

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska, Sharon, Omaha (402) 571-7771.

LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA

Lincoln Family Support Group for adult patients and family members with leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease, myeloma or myelodysplastic syndromes. Call The L & L Society, 402-344-2242 in Omaha, 402-438-2242 in Lincoln. Omaha-area group meets 2nd Tuesday of the month and Lincoln-area group meets 2nd Monday of the month. Call for more info.

Lincoln Telephone Support Group for adult Myeloma, Lymphoma and Leukemia patients and family members; Mondays 10-11am; talk with support group from home; free service of Nebraska Chapter, The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Call Tonya: 402-344-2242 or 1-888-847-4974.

MDA

MDA Duchene Parents Support Group, Omaha/Papillion, meets quarterly Sat., 1-3; Papillion/LaVista High School, 420 S Washington St; Maggie Phillips 402-390-2914

MENTAL ILLNESS

Page Co Serious & Persistent Mental Illness, 3rd Wed. at 1:30 p.m., call Jennifer 1-712-542-2388.

Nebraska Family Support Network an advocacy organization for families of children & youth with mental illness, supporting Cass, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy & Washington counties. 3568 Dodge St, Omaha, NE 68131, (402) 345-0791.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) <http://www.nami.org/sites/ne>. For questions, please call Dan Jackson at NAMI Nebraska, 1941 S. 42nd St., Suite 517, Omaha, NE 68105 Phone: 1-877-463-6264;

Mental Health Association of Nebraska 1-800-422-6691 or www.MHA-NE.org

Council Bluffs, NAMI meets 1st Thurs of mo., call Laura at 1-712-242-0050.

Grand Island 877-463-6264; or Carole Denton (308) 382-8604; jdenton@navix.net

Hastings NAMI Hastings, Kevin Ehly (402) 462-8657;

Juniata/Hastings NAMI - FORSE, Cindy Scott (402) 751-2226, hs35558@navix.net; Hastings

NAMI CARE (Consumers Advocating Recovery Through Empowerment) Linda Shaw (402) 463-6354.

Kearney NAMI Central Nebraska, Linda Jensen (308) 865-8729 or Cindy Mayer (308) 234-3212.

Lincoln NAMI Lincoln, Susan Krome (402) 484-8653; Tami Walden (402) 471-4515; Mental Health Lincoln Support Group, Tuesdays 3-4 pm Bennet Martin Library.

McCook NAMI Of SW Nebraska, Sandy Graves (308) 345-3013.

Norfolk/Hartington NAMI Northeast Nebraska, Tom Barr (402) 371-7175.

North Platte NAMI Platte Valley, Margaret Baker (308) 535-7434.

Oakland NAMI Greater Burt County Nebraska, Wayne Jarvill, (402) 685-6857.

Scottsbluff NAMI Western Nebraska, Shirley McLaughlin (308) 635-2239,
shirley@prairie.web.com

Sutherland NAMI Trails West Nebraska, Margaret Baker (308) 284-4078, bakerm@gpcom.net

MULTIPLE CHEMICAL SENSITIVITY

MCS Information Exchange,

3 Larrabee Farm Road, Brunswick, ME, 04011. conceptmed.com

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Omaha, (402) 572-3190 or 1-800-755-3959

Lincoln, contact Karen Olson (402) 486-1885

Norfolk, (402) 648-7906

Council Bluffs, meets 3rd Thursday every month, 7 pm, Jerry Ebsen (712) 366-9569.

MYOSITIS

Support Group, Lincoln, Contact Mac Warren, (402) 438-5183. Online, www.myositis.org

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Parent Training and Information (PTI) for Families of Children with Disabilities 3135 N 93 St, Omaha, phone & fax: (402) 346-0525; 1-800-284-8520; kheinen@pti-nebraska.org

PARKINSON

Lincoln Support Group meets 4th Sunday each month (except December); 2:00 pm; Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital, 5401 South St (52nd St entrance); Contact: Jill 402-486-8164 or Lori, 402-486-9040. Call for schedule of topics.

Fremont (402) 478-4853

Panhandle Area meets 4th Wed each month; Northfield Villa-Bldg 6, Vista Dining Rm, 1:30 pm; Contact: Maurice Wheeler (308) 623-2508

Clarinda, IHS, 600 Manor Dr., 2 pm, 3rd Thursday of each month. Connie (712) 542-5161

PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Lincoln Support Group meets at Bryan Medical Plaza, 1600 S. 48 St; 2nd Floor; Room 3; Call Sandy (402) 483-4908.

POLIO

Nebr Polio Survivors Assoc., Omaha 402-341-0710.

Lincoln/Lancaster County, Vera (402) 467-5650.

RESPIRATORY

Better Breathers, 4th Monday at 4 pm, call Sharon at 712-328-5479.

The American Lung Association of Nebraska offers programs & services to prevent lung disease & promote lung health education, research & advocacy. For more information call 1-800-586-4872.

SCHIZOPHRENICS ANONYMOUS

Lincoln Group meets Fridays 7-9pm; First Plymouth, 20th & D St.

SCLERODERMA

Lincoln meets at Roper & Son Resource Ctr, 4400 S 70 St; Leader: Terry Christensen (308) 384-4017; terry058@webtv.net

Omaha meets 2nd Tues. every other month, 7-9 pm at Methodist Cancer Center; 8303 Dodge St; lower lobby; Leader: Barb Heenan (402) 291-7670; omahassg@aol.com

Grand Island meets at St. Francis Hospital, 2620 Faidley Ave, Conf. Rm 3A; Support Leader: Terry Christensen (308) 384-4017; terry058@webtv.net

South Sioux City meets at S. Sioux City Library Annex every other month, 6:30 p.m. Call Jane (402) 494-4532 for more information.

SPINA BIFIDA

Spina Bifida Ass'n of the Star City, Lincoln, Jerry (402) 434-3000.

Spina Bifida Support Group, Omaha, meets 1st Wednesday each month 7 pm, Quality Living East Campus, Cabana Room; Call Jolene (402) 894-2070.

SPINAL CORD INJURY/DISEASE

ENWISCIA: Please call Brian Richardson, 402-573-6904 for information or e-mail at ENWISCIA@cox.net. No regular meetings at this time.

Spinal Cord Injury Peers (SCIP) (Nebraska Panhandle) meets monthly; Regional West Medical Ctr, Scottsbluff. Call (308)635-7901; 630-1070; or Cheryl 436-1060.

Central NE Spinal Cord Injury Group, Hastings. Call Darla McAllister H: 402-463-5926 or W:461-5161, bamadarla@alltel.net

STROKE

4th Thurs./month @ 1pm @ Madonna ProActive, 7111 Stephanie Lane, Lincoln, (402) 483-9590.

“Come Back Club”, Lincoln 1-888-808-5678.

Cass Co., 3rd Wednesday at 3 pm at 1501 E 10th St, Atlantic, IA. Barb, 712-243-3250.

TOURETTE SYNDROME

Lincoln Nebr. Assoc. for Tourette Syndrome Group (402) 467-9077

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

For Sale: Aluminum ramp, it has one platform 5' x 7'; one platform 6' x 6' and two ramps with railing that are 11' long each. Asking \$1,200. Please call Deb at (402) 371-3801. (Norfolk)

For Sale: Electric bed; Quickie electric wheelchair with power tilt seat; tub lift; manual wheelchair. Please call Marvin at (402) 470-0609. (Lincoln)

For Sale: Electric wheelchair - Action Ranger II Storm Series. Seat is 16" deep and 16" wide. Has head rest and reclining back. Please call Jerry at (402) 376-3037. (Valentine)

Wanted: PIE BP pulsed irrigation system, reasonably priced. No insurance. Will make down payment and pay balance on contract, bi-weekly or monthly. Please call Kenny at (712) 674-3849. (Arion)

For Sale: Invacare Tracer 5x, full recline wheelchair, removable elevating leg rests, 20"x16" seat, 24" wheels. Used six months, asking \$500 OBO. Invacare Hydraulic lift, model 9805, with harness, used 13 months, \$400 OBO. RoHo seat cushion, 20"x16", asking \$20. Please call Corrine at (402) 371-4452. (Norfolk)

For Sale: 1997 Ford Astro Star Van, 4-wheel drive with wheelchair lift in rear, \$5,500 OBO. Please call Robert at (402) 429-4756. (Friend)

For Sale: Electric Mini Jazzy scooter, indoor/outdoor, near new, asking \$950. Please call Jeanette at (402) 455-2835. (Omaha)

YOUR \$5 AD WILL REACH 8,000 READERS!

Contact Us at:

LEAGUE OF HUMAN DIGNITY, attn: Michelle, 1701 P Street Lincoln, NE 68508;

402-441-7871 (V/TDD) FAX: 441-7650
(\$5.00 for first 25 words, 25 cents for each additional word)

LEAGUE OF HUMAN DIGNITY
PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LIVING SINCE 1971

You Can Help by sending a donation in any amount to the League of Human Dignity, 1701 P Street, Lincoln, NE 68508.

You may honor a loved one's birthday through an Honorarium Gift; remember someone special in death with a Memorial Gift; include the League in your will; support our benefit auctions; or be creative and come up with your own style of giving!

(pictured in the upper left of the page is a lift chair)

MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL

This is not just a lift chair. It is independence. Does someone in your life need a little more independence? Would a scooter or a lift chair add freedom back into your life? If you answered a resounding YES, then this is the time to come to Mobility Options for a special deal.

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