



RESOURCE CENTER

for independent living

Consumer Newsletter • Winter 2016

Want to get Involved?

RCIL has several peer support groups in various places in Eastern Kansas.

Come and join us!

Visually Impaired Person (VIP) Groups

Locations: Abilene, Junction City, and Wamego.

Contact Mandy Smith at 1-785-528-3105 for more information.

RCIL Friends Groups

Locations: El Dorado, Emporia, Eureka, Fort Scott, Iola, Osage City, and Paola.

See page 4 in this newsletter for details.

Office Closures

Dec 23 & 26, 2016 - Christmas

Jan. 2, 2017 - New Year's Day

Apr. 14, 2017 - Good Friday



Consumer Christmas Parties

The holiday season is here! RCIL will have their annual consumer Christmas parties during the month of December. Below is a listing of the dates and locations of the parties. Pick the event you would like to attend and RSVP to the RCIL office hosting that event at least one week prior. Please be sure to request special accommodations when you RSVP if necessary.

The Christmas parties are being held in conjunction with the December RCIL Friends meetings. There will be fun activities and food provided. If you have questions or would like more information, feel free to contact your local RCIL office.

RCIL staff would like to wish you a Happy Holiday Season and safe travels.

Christmas Parties Schedule

Fort Scott - Dec. 7 at the Fort Scott Housing Authority (315 Scott St.) from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Iola - Dec. 13 at the Iola Housing Authority (217 N. Washington Ave.) from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Osage City - Dec. 14 at the Park Place Apartments (207 S. 6th St.) from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Paola - Dec. 16 at the Paola Housing Authority (310 S. Iron Ave.) from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Emporia - Dec. 19 at the Broadview Towers Apartments (110 W. 6th Ave.) from 1:30pm - 3:30pm

Eureka - Dec. 20 at the Magic Circle Apartments in the South Community Room (301 Magic Circle Rd.) from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

El Dorado - Dec. 21 at the RCIL Office (615 1/2 N. Main) from 1:00pm - 3:00pm



Internet Access from AT&T

AT&T offers the Access program to provide low-cost wireline home Internet service to qualifying households in Kansas. The Access program gives consumers an opportunity to have access to the internet in their home to find employment, connect with fam-

ily and friends, research health questions, connect with RCIL and other agencies, and a whole lot more.

AT&T is offering low-cost wireline home Internet service to qualifying households:

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RCIL Directors

Deone Wilson
Executive Director

Mike Pitts
Deputy Director

Becky Brewer
*Director of Financial
Management Services*

Adam Burnett
Director of Core Services

Tania Harrington
*Director of Disability
Services*

Alternate Formats

To receive a copy of
this newsletter in an
alternate format, please
call 1.800.580.7245.

Seeking Contestants for Ms. Wheelchair Kansas and Little Miss Wheelchair Kansas

The Ms. Wheelchair Kansas, Inc. (MWKS) is currently searching for women of achievement, who are wheelchair mobile, to serve as contestants in the 13th Annual Ms. Wheelchair Kansas event. They are also seeking nominations for the Little Miss Wheelchair Kansas program that celebrates young spirited girls who are wheelchair mobile. The event will be held on March 17-19, 2017 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Lawrence, Kansas.

The Ms. Wheelchair Kansas Program is NOT a beauty contest, but rather a competition to select the most articulate, accomplished delegate to serve as a role model and spokesperson for people with disabilities in Kansas. Some of following are requirements to be a contestant for the MWKS:

- be a US citizen who is 21 years of age or older

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Consumer Success Story

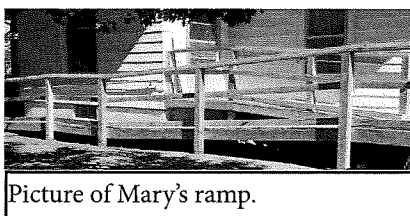
Mary has a physical disability and has difficulty accessing her home. She has had 5 hip surgeries and is awaiting a total hip replacement. Mary uses a walker and her home had settled a great deal. She had concrete blocks on top of the highest step (due to the settling) and she was unable to make the huge step into the home. Trying to balance her walker on the steps and the concrete blocks was an accident waiting to happen.

Mary contacted RCIL in the Emporia office and started working with Independent Living Specialist Ellana by developing a plan on what steps to take to get a ramp built. Mary is a very bright lady who wanted to be totally involved in her plan. She learned how to

complete a Build a Ramp Program application from Ellana. She overcame her barriers to secure two bids from very busy contractors to submit her application. During that process, Mary was persistent in her plan. Since she rents her home, she worked with her landlord to receive input and to choose a contractor.

They chose a contractor not only based on his bid, but received good first impression, answered their questions, and when the project could be started. Mary also applied for additional funding from United Cerebral Palsy and Independence Inc. Seven months later when Mary developed her plan, her three applications were approved and she had her ramp built.

At the conclusion of the project Ellana asked Mary what she had learned. Mary said that "I didn't realize it would be such an extended project and all the hoops we would have to jump through.



Picture of Mary's ramp.

There was a lot of paperwork but it has been totally worth it and the ramp helps me tremendously. I have also had my eyes dilated, had two cataract surgeries and the ramp has been great. It allows me to go out more and I feel so much safer and independent. I am still waiting on my second hip replacement and I'm on the surgery schedule for later this year. After the surgery I am confident I can return home and continue to access my home safely."



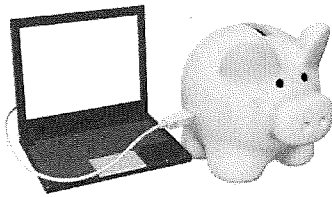
Notice Regarding Direct Deposit and Holiday Payroll for your Direct Service Workers

With the holiday season fast approaching, the RCIL Financial Management Services (FMS) Department would like you, the consumer/employer, to inform your Direct Service Workers (DSWs) of the advantages of using Direct Deposit for their wage payments.

Wages that are paid by Direct Deposit are automatically transferred to the DSW's account on Fridays (unless it is a bank holiday and the transfer occurs on the day before the holiday). Wages that are paid with a paper check are mailed on Fridays (unless it is a U.S. Postal Service holiday). Once the paychecks are mailed, RCIL has no control over when the U.S. Postal Service will deliver your DSW's check. The volume of mail that is processed by the U.S. Postal Service

usually increases dramatically over the holiday season which sometimes results in even longer processing and delivery of your DSW's check.

RCIL will be making a policy change that requires all Direct Service Workers to sign up for and use Direct Deposit before February 1, 2017. We will no longer offer wage payment by check after February 1, 2017.



Please inform your Direct Service Worker of this important policy change and encourage them to consider enrolling in a Direct Deposit

option now to avoid any frustration on their part by a paycheck being delayed in the mail over the holiday season. The bank holidays this year in December and January do

not interfere with the normal Friday Direct Deposits. However, the U.S. Postal Service will also be observing the holidays and will have additional days when the mail is not delivered (Monday, December 26, 2016 and Monday, January 2, 2017).



RCIL has a Global Cash Card option or your DSW can choose to use their personal checking or savings account or another bank card that has their name, routing number and account number.

Have your DSW contact RCIL at 1-800-580-7245 for information on how to sign up for Direct Deposit.

Happy Holidays! 🎄

Kansas Youth Leadership Forum Seeking Delegates

The Kansas Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (KSYLF) is currently searching for motivated young leaders to attend the 17th annual forum held July 10-15, 2017 at Washburn University in Topeka. Do you know of a high school junior or senior with a disability who would be interested to gain leadership skills?

During the forum, delegates enjoy a week full of learning, fun, friends, and a new sense of empowerment! Through various large sessions, delegates are able to hear from community leaders on such topics as

disability history, advocacy, goal setting, leadership, resources, and much more. Delegates are also able to share life experiences, goals, and ideas during breakout sessions with small groups. By the end of the forum, all students will have stated their future plans and career goals in their very own Personal Leadership Plan.

Interested students must fill out an application that will be reviewed through a competitive selection process. The application deadline for the 2017 Forum is December

15, 2016. There will be no cost for students who are selected to attend. Accommodations such as personal care attendants, sign language interpreters, large print or Braille materials, and other accommodations will be provided to those students who request them.



KSYLF application and additional information about KSYLF are on the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYEa) website at www.kyea.org/upcomingksylf or you can contact KYEA at 1-866-577-5932. 📞

Internet Access from AT&T Cont.

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- With at least one resident who participates in the U.S. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and
- With an address in AT&T's service area in Kansas where they offer wireline home Internet service, and
- Without outstanding debt for AT&T fixed Internet service within the last six months or outstanding debt incurred under this program.

If you qualify, the service availability and speed may vary by address. AT&T will assign you the fastest of these speed tiers available where you live:

- 10 megabits per second, for \$10 per month



- 5 megabits per second, for \$10 per month
- 3 megabits per second, for \$5 per month

If none of the above speeds are technically available at your address, unfortunately you won't be able to participate in the Access program from AT&T at this time. However, please continue to check back with AT&T because they are updating their systems so that lower speed tiers can qualify in the future.

Are you interested and want to apply? Call an AT&T representative at 1-855-220-5211 to request an application. If you need assistance to complete the application, contact your local RCIL office and an Independent Living Specialist will assist you.

Seeking Contestants Cont.

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- utilize a wheelchair for 100% of daily community mobility
- be a resident of Kansas for at least the past six months

Interested participants must then send in a completed application with a \$150 entry fee, which can be obtained through sponsors or the nominator, as well as a written letter of recommendation and a portrait for the program.

A new Little Miss Wheelchair Kansas will also be selected this year. This program recognizes young girls, ages 5-12, who are wheelchair mobile, dynamic, spirited, positive, and who have something to say to the people in our state. The chosen Little Miss will work along-



side Ms. Wheelchair Kansas to empower and educate people of all ages and will serve as a role model to her peers. Contestants can be nominated by family, teachers, or other community members.

Applications for both programs must be postmarked by January 7, 2017. To learn more about the Ms. Wheelchair Kansas or Little Miss programs; to become a contestant; or to nominate a contestant, please contact Carrie Greenwood, State Coordinator, at 785-267-5982 or via email at mswheelchairkansas@yahoo.com. More information, a printable application, and a nomination form can also be found on the MWKS website at www.mswheelchairkansas.org.

You Asked for It

What is LIEAP?

Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) is a federally funded program which helps qualifying households to pay their home heating and cooling energy costs. LIEAP applications are available at your local Department for Children and Families (DCF) office from mid-January through the end of March 2017.

When do I file my Homestead Refund?

The deadline to file homestead refund is April 18, 2017. The homestead refund is based on a portion of the property tax paid on a Kansas resident's home and the maximum refund is \$700. To qualify for homestead refund, you must be a Kansas resident and living in Kansas the entire year. Also, your total household income must be \$34,000 or less.

If you have any questions or need any resources call Independent Living Specialist at 1-800-580-7245.