



Independent Living Coordinators
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 Felicia Brown
 Vantoria Clay
 Brenda Carper
 Tecla Cogdell
 Esther Dickerson
 Frances Durham
 Ben Conley
 Tara Ferguson-Davis
 Kelly Gonzalez
 Linda Johnson
 Michelle Liddle
 Rena Lewis
 Catherine Rector
 Ruthanne Spindler
 Paige Shaw
 Cheryl Ward

Administration
 Stephen Johnson, Executive Director
 Maureen Hollowell, Director of Advocacy and Services
 Lisbet Ward, Director of Advocacy and Services
 Amadeo San Antonio, Finance Director
 Cheryl Simpson, Operations Manager
Administrative Support
 Carol Crabill, Executive Assistant
 Barbara Dixon, Accounting Clerk
 Tammy Manno, Administrative Assistant
 Jenny Woodhull, Administrative Assistant
 Lonnie Sublett, Network Administrator

Staff Members (April 2008)



Michael Wang, President
 Chris Daley, Vice-President
 Beverly Reid, Treasurer
 Patricia Anglemann
 Ex-Officio:
 Kathleen Blanchard
 Cheryl Dreweary
 Anita Golden
 Stephen Johnson
 Lynn Kushner
 Carmen Mendez
 Tom Swanson
 Stephanie Thomas

Board Members (April 2008)



Service Highlights for 2007

During the year, the following services were provided:

- 1,353 Individuals with disabilities received direct services
- 1,341 Independent Living goals were accomplished by Center Participants

Hours of services directly provided to individuals with disabilities:

- 5,573 Individual Advocacy
- 3,174 Peer Counseling Services
- 1,324 Independent Living Skills Training
- 1,194 Housing, Home Modifications & Shelter Services
- 313 Assistive Devices/Equipment Services
- 308 Information & Referral Services to Center participants
- 370 Communication Services
- 346 Socialization Services
- 173 Youth Services

Hours of Community Activities Provided:

- 2,896 Collaboration/Networking
- 2,816 Information & Referral
- 2,066 Community Education & Public Information
- 1,683 Community/Systems Advocacy
- 977 Outreach Efforts
- 762 Volunteer
- 741 Funding & Resource Development
- 307 Technical Assistance

October 2006 to September 2007

2007 Operating Revenues: \$1,724,092

Federal Government	38%
State Government	27%
Local Government	11%
Other Grants, Contracts & Fundraising	24%
Services to Individual Consumers	49%
Community Services	34%
Management & General	17%

Public Support and Revenue

Funding



- Peer Counseling
- Independent Living Skills Training
- Individual and Systems Advocacy
- Information and Referral
- Community Education/Training

Services



The Endependence Center, Incorporated (ECI) is a consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, private, non-profit Center for Independent Living (CIL) operated by and for individuals with disabilities in South Hampton Roads. The purposes of ECI are to prepare individuals and to prepare the community for full participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society. These goals are accomplished by the following strategies: (1) the provision of direct services to individuals with significant disabilities, that result in a greater level of independence and community integration/functioning (2) the provision of services/advocacy in the community that result in a greater awareness of disability issues, physical and programmatic accessibility and systems change.

Purpose



Endependence Center, Inc.
 6300 East Virginia Beach Boulevard
 Norfolk, VA 23502

In our time, as part of the disability community in South Hampton Roads, we have seen barriers to independence slowly diminish as buildings became accessible, and support services such as Medicaid Waivers became available. The Tides Stadium in Norfolk has won awards for its model accessibility, and the Oceanfront in Virginia Beach has established wheelchair access to the sand. Accessible public transportation is available in some areas. Some local movie theaters now offer options with close captioning or audio description. Yet, accessible and affordable housing is scarce for those who desire to move out of nursing homes or family homes to independent lives in the community. The disability community has made significant progress, but there remains much to be done. We hope you will continue to partner with the Endependence Center and the local disability community as we enter the next phase of advocacy and independent living. We welcome your collaboration in our efforts to empower people with disabilities and provide opportunities for self determination and equal access to all areas of life in South Hampton Roads.

As an organization that works on behalf of people with disabilities, we promoted Independent Living, equal rights and access for people with disabilities in South Hampton Roads for 26 years.

In 1981, the Endependence Center, Inc. (ECI) opened its doors and became the first Center for Independent Living (CIL) in Virginia of which there are now 16 CILs assisting the disability community with direct services towards independence and breaking down barriers and attitudes in the community that prevent full integration of persons with disabilities. Our mission statement is "Opening Doors to Opportunities".

Community Message



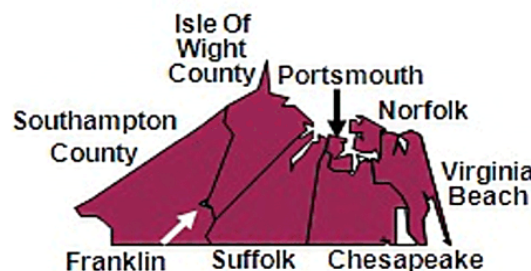
Endependence Center, Inc.



2007 Annual Report

October 2006 - September 2007

Service Area Map



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 Permit No. 102

2007 Annual Highlights

Peer Networking

Individual and Group Peer Networking

ECL offers various opportunities to receive peer based support to work on independent living goals and to learn about resources in the community. Staff who have disabilities work one-on-one or in group settings with individuals with disabilities to increase self advocacy skills, learn about their rights and work toward independent living goals.

⇒ **Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC)**

The Consumer Advisory Committee is comprised of active Center participants who perform an annual Participant Satisfaction Survey of ECL services.

Youth

Peer networking is based on the philosophy that living with a disability provides the best expertise on independent living. Peer networking is an empowerment model in which individuals with disabilities share their knowledge and experiences of living independently, advocacy and resources with each other through support groups, or by working with a staff with a disability.

This year several different types of support groups were made available to the disability community.

Individual and Systems Advocacy

Education

Changes to the law governing education for students with disabilities, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004, were put into effect on October 14, 2006. This process greatly increased the amount of professional development for our staff, as well as education and training for students and their families. We held a variety of workshops and advocacy group meetings that focused on the changes taking place at the federal level and the ones anticipated to take place at the state and local levels. This work continues as these changes are ongoing.

Medical

ECL staff collaborated with advocates across the state to educate legislators to address Medicaid Waiver funding and slots. Our staff will continue their advocacy efforts to increase the support services provided by Medicaid Waivers.

Disability Action Network (DAN)

ECL helped to facilitate DAN. The DAN became a local advocacy group that addressed local disability issues and helped to educate legislators regarding the needs. The main Projects that DAN was involved with were educating the public on the needs of the disability community related to independent living and addressing issues related to taxi services

Taxi Cab Access

The local disability community began advocacy regarding the availability of access to taxi cabs and what is required by law. Transportation continues to be one of the pressing needs of people with disabilities, which includes main line bus system, Para-transit services, taxi cab access and having resources to purchase personal accessible vehicles and obtaining drivers as needed.

VACL Coordination

The Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living is a membership organization of CILs that advocate for inclusion of people with disabilities into all aspects of society. ECL staff provided coordination of the advocacy efforts of VACL.

Community Living

Medicaid Consumer Directed Facilitation

Facilitation services were provided to more than 200 people who used the AIDS, DD, EDCD and MR Waivers. A wide age range of individuals, from 7 months old to 87 years old, used consumer directed personal care services to enhance their lives.

Medical Case Management

Individual and Family Developmental Disabilities Support Waivers were used by approximately 100 people who received DD case management through ECL. An increased number of people used employment supports to expand their ability to live independently in the community.

Nursing Home Outreach and Transition

Common barriers to moving out of a nursing home into your own home include a lack of affordable and accessible housing, and access to needed support services. However, transition is possible with planning, and six individuals moved out of nursing homes this year. A young woman just graduating from high school moved out of a nursing home and is now attending college. A woman with MS and a hearing impairment moved from assisted living into her own apartment and received information on assistive technology for her hearing loss. A man in his forties called the center after a gun shot wound changed his life. He was discharged from a hospital to a nursing home far from his home city. ECL staff assisted him through peer counseling and housing counseling to obtain home modifications and a Medicaid Waiver so he was able to adapt his town home for wheelchair access and live independently. He is now learning about his options to go back to work. Many other individuals are exploring their options and making plans to transition as soon as accessible and affordable housing and services can be put in place.

DRS PAS (Department of Rehabilitative Services Personal Assistance Program)

The waiting list for DRS PAS continued to grow. ECL collaborated with other CILs to develop a budget amendment with the General Assembly to increase the number of people who can be served by DRS PAS.

Housing Counseling

The Endependence Center maintains and updates a resource packet on subsidized and public housing in our region and how to apply for these as well as Section 8 vouchers. Staff assisted 201 individuals to prepare for living independently, get on wait lists for housing, and to identify accessible housing options and home modification funds.

Information and Referral

Information & Referral

ECL provides information and makes referrals to the community on a large variety of topics such as:

Center Services

- ⇒ Education issues and IEP development
- ⇒ Housing availability and modifications
- ⇒ Emergency financial information
- ⇒ Ticket-to-Work and Social Security benefits information
- ⇒ Medicaid Waiver programs
- ⇒ Access to Transportation
- ⇒ Adaptive equipment and accommodations

Training/Workshops

Independent Living Skills Training

Workshops on a variety of topics are held and ECL maintains a quarterly schedule of workshops. Topics include transportation, Medicaid services, Americans with Disabilities Act, Independent Living philosophy/history, education, work incentives in Social Security programs, employment, and alternatives to guardianship.

Medicaid Trainings

Medicaid Waiver training was provided by the Waiver Mentors throughout Virginia in eleven locations. Training was targeted to persons with disabilities, their families and to local screening teams. The training covered basic Medicaid information and details on the seven Medicaid home and community based Waivers.

Assistive Technology and Home Modifications

TAP

ECL is assisting the Virginia Department of Deaf and Hard of Hearing-Technical Assistance Program (VDHH-TAP) with test trials on new telecommunication equipment, which to date has been very successful. ECL also provided sensitivity training to local 911 Centers, including how to recognize and respond to Teletypewriter (TTY) calls.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for Ramps and Bathroom Accessibility

ECL received CDBG Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds through the City of Norfolk to administer a Home Modification Assistance Project for low-income Norfolk residents--renters and homeowners--with disabilities. The purpose of the project was to make home modifications to provide accessible entrances and assistance with bathroom modifications. Several applicants were screened and found eligible for the assistance and their modifications were completed in 2007.

Recycling of Adaptive Equipment

In October 2007, a program was started at the Virginia Beach Boulevard Goodwill location to collect and donate needed adaptive equipment to those who need it and cannot afford it. This program was the result of a collaborative planning effort between ECL, Virginia Assistive Technology Systems (at Old Dominion University) and other partnering organizations and individuals. Recycled equipment includes items such as manual and power wheelchairs, walkers and shower chairs.

Innovative Projects this past year

Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC)

The DBTAC grant continues to provide ADA training, resources and technical assistance throughout Virginia. This year, the annual Ask the Experts Conference on the ADA was done as a video conference linking four regions of the State, and providing workshops on transportation, hotel access and employment.

ECL is the base for the Virginia ADA Coalition.

Assistance and Benefits Linked for Employment (Project ABLE)

ECL staff and staff from six other CILs provided information and counseling on seeking employment and using work incentives to individuals in the Southeast region of the State who receive Social Security benefits. Project ABLE Specialists provided assistance to several hundred individuals through this program. Project ABLE is a continuing project funded through the federal Social Security Administration. The continuation grant with SSA is renamed to Project WISE (Work Incentives for Services and Employment).

Volunteers

Individuals from the community play an important role at ECL volunteering their time and talents to enhance services provided by ECL. During the year, volunteer projects included literacy tutoring, building maintenance activities, clerical support and receptionist duties.

