Heads Up Group  
Contact Dave Munroe at SCIL:  
(217)523-2587 v/tt

Stroke/Brain Injury Support Group  
Contact Carolyn Thorpe at SCIL:  
(217)523-2587 v/tt

Personal Assistant Employers Group  
Contact Bradley Kinney at SCIL:  
(217)523-2587 v/tt

Post-Polio Group  
Contact Bradley Kinney at SCIL:  
(217)523-2587 v/tt

WREN (Women’s Resource Empowerment Network)  
Contact Susanne Cooper at SCIL:  
(217)523-2587 v/tt

BEST (Becoming Empowered and Successful Teens) and Parent Transition Support Group  
Contact SCIL for more information.  
(217)523-2587 v/tt

Lincolnland Stroke Support Network  
Contact SCIL for more information.  
(217)523-2587 v/tt

Accessible Healthcare Workshop Held

Nineteen individuals attended an accessible healthcare workshop held on June 26, 2014 at SCIL. Andrés J. Gallegos, Esq., a disability rights attorney with the law firm of Robbins, Salomon and Patt, Ltd in Chicago, provided a two and a half hour presentation on accessible healthcare.

We have received many positive comments on the June workshop and several individuals have expressed an interest to hear Andrés speak again. We asked Andrés if he would provide us with an article for our next newsletter, and he was very happy to satisfy that request. We hope we can schedule Andrés to return to Springfield for another presentation, but until then, please enjoy his very informative article below.

Patient Advocacy: The Key to Accessible Healthcare

By Andrés J. Gallegos, Esq.

For several days, John had a severe toothache that was getting worse each passing day. The throbbing pain was affecting his ability to speak, he could not chew his food, and he had difficulty sleeping. His family called the dentist in the town where he lived to get John an emergency appointment. The dentist told the family that he could not treat John because John uses a wheelchair and there was no way to transfer him onto the examination chair.

John’s family called other dentists in town and each told John’s family different reasons why they could not treat him – there were stairs leading to the main entrance, the examination room was too small to fit his wheelchair, or he could not be treated unless he transferred to the exam chair. John’s family called every dentist in town and in nearby towns, each of them offered reasons – which were now all too familiar to John’s family – as to why they could not treat John. One month after John’s family called the first dentist, John was treated at a dental clinic 2.5 hours from his house. Because there was a delay in getting treatment, John required oral surgery because the tooth was now abscessed.

For persons with disabilities, John’s story is their story, and it’s an all too familiar story. All persons with disabilities have multiple stories like John’s, involving dentists, primary care physicians, and other health care providers.

(Continued on page 2)
care doctors, gynecologists, optometrists and others. It has been 24 years since the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and persons with disabilities still receive less than equal treatment when it comes to healthcare. It has also been nearly 10 years since the Surgeon General of the United States issued a Call to Action to Improve the Health and Wellness of Persons with Disabilities in order “to promote accessible, comprehensive healthcare that enables persons with disabilities to have a full life in the community with integrated services.” In his report, the Surgeon General highlighted the problems, such as:

- Persons who are blind are not provided or offered treatment or wellness information in accessible formats;
- Persons who are deaf are not provided sign language interpreters or video remote interpreting (VRI) and no procedures exist to have sign language interpretive services or VRI readily available for deaf patients;
- Examination rooms are too small or are cluttered with furniture, precluding persons with mobility impairments who rely upon the use of wheelchairs to freely maneuver their wheelchairs inside those examination rooms;
- Examination tables do not lower to facilitate the persons with mobility impairments who rely upon the use of wheelchairs to independently transfer from their wheelchairs onto the examination tables;
- No safe means are provided to lift persons with mobility impairments who rely upon the use of wheelchairs from their wheelchairs onto examination tables, such as portable lift systems;
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SERTOMA Hearing Aid Recycling Program

The SERTOMA Club of Springfield, Illinois established the SHARP program in 1990. SHARP stands for SERTOMA Hearing Aid Recycling Program. The purpose of the program is to help individuals who need hearing aids but cannot afford them. Senior citizens and low-income individuals are the primary recipients.

Hearing aids can be donated to the SERTOMA Club by calling 217-529-0341, or bring them to The Hearing Center at 644 N Second, in Springfield. The donated hearing aids are stored at The Hearing Center, which is an affiliate of Memorial Medical Center.

The SERTOMA Club receives referrals from many sources, including the Senior Services Center of Central Illinois, doctors’ offices, Department on Aging, churches, visiting nurses, and self-referrals. The application process is easy:

1. Applicants fill out and submit a simple one page application itemizing their ongoing expenses and provide a copy of a document supporting their income (copy of 1040 tax return or VA/Social Security statement). Note that generally people on Medicare are not eligible for hearing aids – but individuals on Medicaid should check their status first before applying.
2. The SHARP committee reviews and approves the application, an approval letter is sent to the applicant, and a copy is forwarded to The Hearing Center.
3. The Hearing Center contacts the applicant to schedule an appointment for an audiological exam, evaluation for the most appropriate type of aids/aid for the individual, and if necessary, a wax ear mold.
4. The Hearing Center selects a used hearing aid from their stock and sends it to a repair laboratory to be refurbished to a like-new condition meeting the applicant’s specifications.
5. About two weeks later, the recipient is contacted to return to The Hearing Center for the final fitting, adjustment, and instructions on the care of the hearing aid. At this time, the recipient is requested to remit $250, which is the cost of the audiological exam and the lab’s refurbishing fees.

The Sertoma Club does not have an ongoing role with the recipient once the hearing aid is received. The recipient will work directly with The Hearing Center after placement to resolve any issues that may arise.

Contact The SERTOMA Club with questions about the hearing aid program by calling Joan at: 217-529-0341. The mailing address for the Sertoma Club is: Springfield Sertoma Club PO Box 2471 Springfield, IL 62705-2491.

InnoCaption – Free Service for deaf or hard of hearing

What is InnoCaption Service? InnoCaption provides free real-time caption service for the deaf and HOH (Hard of Hearing) mobile user. It will function with any smartphone that utilize the Android or iPhone OS. InnoCaption app is turned on whenever an inbound call is delivered and automatically turned off once the call is terminated by either party. This gives the caption user peace of mind that they can give their caption number out to anyone with no fear of a complicated process to follow by either party. In addition our product will automatically turn off once the call is terminated.

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need for the appointment. If you think you’ll need a bit more time for the visit, ask for it.

• During the Appointment. This stage requires the careful balancing of advocating, but foremost, getting the care that you need. In this stage, upon arrival, confirm that the specific accommodation you requested is in fact there for you to use. Do not remain silent if it is not there in the exam or treatment room to check. If the accommodation you requested is not there, then insist upon it being made available or consider rescheduling the appointment for a date and time when it will be available. If you determine you still wish to go forward with the exam, procedure or visit even though the requested accommodation is not there, tell the doctor, nurse and his staff that “for this visit” you’ll agree to go forward without the requested accommodation, but that you insist it be present for the next visit or appointment. Insist that the absence of the requested accommodation be recorded in your medical record for that visit. Communicate with your doctor, nurses and staff. Ask questions. Give them constructive feedback about what is going right and wrong with the visit. During the visit, always take the time to enable the doctor or his staff. What this means is that although you may have brought a family member or friend to the appointment, allow the doctor, nurse or his staff to help you as needed. If we keep having friends and family help, the doctors, nurses and staff will not learn how and never offer to help. This also means if you are asked for your weight, insist you be weighed. Before leaving the hospital, clinic or facility, be sure that you have contact information (that is, mailing address, email address, and telephone number) for the doctor, the manager or director of patient relations, the ADA director (if there is one), and of anyone else at the hospital, clinic or facility who handles patient complaints.

• Post-Appointment. As soon as possible after the appointment provide the doctor, nurse and staff written feedback about what went right and what went wrong during the appointment. The feedback should be as specific as possible as identifying what occurred, how it impacted you, and what you would like to happen the next time. For example: “the lift equipment that I requested was not available. In advance of my appointment it was not available. Reluctantly, I agreed to be manually lifted onto the examination table for the appointment. I was greatly concerned that I was going to be dropped or injured. I ask that you ensure that for my next appointment lift equipment will be available, and that you or your staff call me to confirm that it will be available.” Regardless of whether the feedback is praise and gratitude, or criticism, copy the manager or director of patient relations, the ADA director (if there is one), and anyone else at the hospital, clinic or facility who handles patient complaints. If there was a problem and you believe your rights were not respected you should inform your Center for Independent Living and they can guide you in taking action, whether that is filing a complaint with the Illinois Human Rights Commission, Illinois Attorney General, the US Department of Justice or connecting you with disability rights attorneys.

The laws exist. We have the ability to make healthcare truly accessible in our communities, and it starts by each of us becoming better advocates. All of us are stronger when one of us stands up.

Andrés J. Gallegos, Esq., is a disability rights attorney with the law firm of Robbins, Salomon and Patt, Ltd. in Chicago, and has been living with the effects of congenital hearing loss for the past 17 years. Andrés may be reached at (312) 456-0381 or via email at agallegos@rsplaw.com.

12th Annual
CONFERENCE FOR CAREGIVERS
For Caregivers of Older Family Members and Friends and Grandparents and Other Relatives Caring for the Next Generation
Saturday, September 6, 2014
8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Northfield Inn, Suites & Conference Center
3280 Northfield Drive, Springfield, Illinois
Presented by Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland

Conference participants will attend a variety of interesting and educational breakout sessions. Attendees will also have an opportunity to learn about helpful services and products in the exhibit hall. Lunch will be provided and will be followed by a keynote speaker Dr. Carolyn Peck, Associate Professor, Department Chair, Human Services – Gerontology, University of Illinois at Springfield. A registration fee of $20.00 must be mailed with the registration form. This fee will be refunded to attendees at the conference. Call 217-787-9234 for more information and a registration form.
PACER Launches National Parent Center on Transition and Employment

For families of youth with disabilities, the transition from high school to employment, postsecondary education, and life in the community presents a variety of challenges. PACER is launching the National Parent Center on Transition and Employment to support families, youth, educators, and employers as they help teens and young adults with disabilities reach their goals into adulthood.

PACER's Technical Assistance on Transition and the Rehabilitation Act (TATRA) Project and other Parent Information and Training programs funded by the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) focus on helping families prepare youth with disabilities for employment and independent living. Projects provide information and training on transition planning, the adult service system, and strategies that prepare youth for successful employment, postsecondary education, and independent living outcomes.

Current vocational rehabilitation policy emphasizes the preferences of individuals with disabilities and recognizes the importance of family expertise. Because they know their family member's strengths, families help make critical contributions to employment. In addition, parents often provide critical supports for their sons and daughters with disabilities long after they reach adulthood.

The center will offer innovative tools, reliable research, and interactive training to address families' needs in ways that parents and children can easily use. Youth with disabilities often lack knowledge of where to start in planning a goal-setting process. Parents are in a similar situation — most have high expectations for their youth but lack specific information on how to help with the transition and become college and career-ready after high school.

For more information, go to http://www.pacer.org/tatra/rsa.asp

The BEST (Becoming Empowered and Successful Teens) and Parent Transition Support Group will resume in September. Call Carolyn Thorpe, Youth Transition Specialist at: (217) 523-2587 vtty for more information.

10th Annual Illinois Statewide Transition Conference
October 27-28, 2014
The Crowne Plaza Hotel & Conference Center
Springfield, Illinois

The 10th Annual Transition Conference for high school aged students and young adults with disabilities, their family members and teachers, vocational professionals, caregivers, health care professionals, college students pursuing careers in special education and community advocates will be held at The Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center in Springfield, Illinois from October 27-28, 2014.

The conference, titled “Stepping Stones of Transition”, invites participants to imagine the possibilities for students with disabilities in the areas of independent living, education and training, employment, community integration, health care, and self-advocacy.

Conference sessions will be organized into 4 tracks: Education, Employment, Community and Healthcare.

To read more about keynote speakers, breakout sessions, and plenary sessions go to http://www.illinoistransitionconference.org/#registration. Space is limited and breakout sessions have limited capacity on a first come basis. So register early to ensure admission to your top choice sessions. Registration deadline is September 30th.

For more information contact the conference organizers via email at info@illinoistransitionconference.org. A limited number of hard copy registration booklets will be made available by request only to help those who do not have Internet access get registered. Contact Family Matters at 866-436-7842.

Five Complete Spring Legislative Training Program

The Spring 2014 Legislative Training class consisted of 7 sessions. Topics included: an introduction to advocacy, an introduction to government, and advice for meeting with legislators. The participants also attended the CCDI Annual meeting and conference which included a rally at the State Capital. During the rally and visit, participants located their legislators to discuss issues important to people with disabilities.

The training topics were presented through lectures, group discussions, guest speakers, videos, and group activities. On July 18th, the five individuals who completed the program attended a celebration ceremony and were given certificates of completion.

Volunteer Celebration Held at SCIL

The Annual Volunteer Celebration was held at SCIL on June 12, 2014 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. Each volunteer received a certificate of appreciation, a gift and lunch!

Every year SCIL honors the volunteers who graciously donate their time to work at SCIL on an as-needed basis. Volunteers label materials for bulk mailings, answer the telephone, and assist with other projects to free up time for SCIL staff to focus on consumer needs.

If you would like to volunteer at SCIL, please contact Kathy Paul, Volunteer Coordinator.

Do You Want Your Voice to Be Heard?

Springfield Center for Independent Living will hold an informational meeting about the next Legislative Training Program 1-3 PM, Wednesday, October 22, 2014.

Please join us at the SCIL office to learn more about this exciting program. For more information or to reserve a spot, please contact Melissa Norman (217) 523-2587 vtty .

Fall Legislative Training Program
Are You a Person with a Disability?

Volunteer Celebration
Held at SCIL

Are You a Person with a Disability?

Please contact us a minimum of two weeks prior to the meeting if you need accommodations.