



Michigan Partners for Freedom

Building statewide demand for self-determination

MARCH 2010

A note from the MPF Project Coordinator...

Dear Partners,

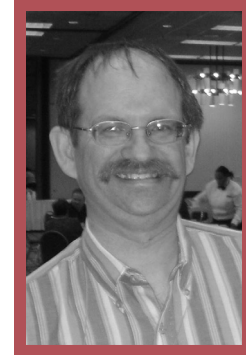
Over the next several months, the Michigan Legislature will finalize the state's budget for the upcoming fiscal year of 2010-2011. Please take a few moments to contact your local State Representative or your State Senator and share your personal story of Self-Determination.

The Michigan Legislature has very difficult decisions ahead. It needs to balance the State's budget either through cuts to programs and services or increase revenue usually through taxes or fees. Tell your legislators about the kind of Michigan you want to live in. If you are not sure who your State Representative or Senator is visit the website www.legislature.mi.gov to search for the legislators' name and contact information. Your advocacy to our state policymakers is the demonstration of the fifth principle of Self-Determination...CONFIRMATION! Share your story and move Self-Determination forward in Michigan.

Best wishes,

Angela Martin

Michigan Partners for Freedom Local Leaders were quite busy before the snow and cold took over. Come springtime, plans are to hit the road again. However, many managed to conduct nine outreach activities which reached 301 individuals. Other MPF Local Leaders have been participating in the Michigan Department of Community Mental Health and in the external work group on self-determination. Others are working on promoting self-determination through a variety of presentations. A few are pictured in the column on the right. For more information visit www.mifreedom.org and click on Local Leaders.



Jeff Guthrie (OAKLAND)



John Donlin (KALAMAZOO)



**Jill Hawley, Jamia Brewer,
Eric Thomas, Gizela
Schwartz (GENESEE)**

SAVE THE DATE

This June in Grand Rapids The Arc of Michigan will celebrate the closing of Mt. Pleasant. Mark your calendar!

A strand in the conference for Arc self-advocates will be held Friday June 18. This session will be facilitated by Johnny Crescendo, a tireless activist and advocate in the worldwide disability movement.

Watch The Arc website for updates about this historic celebration!

www.arcmi.org

800-292-7851 or
517-487-5426

2010 MPF Local Leader Summit

This year's Michigan Partners for Freedom Summit will be held in conjunction with The Arc Michigan annual conference at the Amway Grand hotel in Grand Rapids. We kick off the Summit on **Friday June 18** for the Arc Michigan dinner and continue on **Saturday June 19** until 4:00 pm. Please contact your local MPF coordinator to register.



VISIT MPF on FACEBOOK

Michigan Partners for Freedom is funded by the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council Grant

The
Arc
Michigan

2010

**Arc Michigan
Conference**

June 17, 18 & 19

Amway Grand Hotel

Grand Rapids, MI

*Celebrate Grand Progress
Grand Rapids Style!*

Peer Mentoring

According to a February 26, 2010 memo from Michael J. Head, director of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Administration in the Department of Community Health ***“It is a goal of MDCH to support the growing peer mentor movement for individuals with developmental disabilities by working with the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council on the pilot as well as providing future guidance and support to local peer-to-peer efforts.”***

Self-Determination Local Leader Says: *I Believe that...*



By Renee Uitto

I believe and have always considered myself to be a very independent person. I was very sheltered as a child and knew I did not want to be like that as an adult. One of my biggest accomplishments in life was living on campus when I attended Oakland University. I finally got out of my “little shell” and started to experience life.

After living at school for a year and half, I dreaded of going back to my parents again. I knew I was going to be sheltered again.

I had the chance to live independently again when a friend moved in with me. This is when I started practicing self-determination. I was responsible for paying my own bills, managing my personal care, doing my grocery shopping, and learning how to compromise with someone other than family. It was very hard at first because I was used to my mother being responsible for my needs. I made all my doctor appointments and transportation. I also learned how to call the wheelchair company if my

wheelchair needed any repairs.

However, my real experience with self-determination came last summer when I started living completely on my own. My own definition of self-determination is being determined to live your life the way you want it and having the choices of things that YOU want in your life, not anyone else. I feel like I have that now. I am a member of several committees and recently joined Michigan Partners for Freedom to educate people about self-determination and how it could make a difference in their lives. I get to choose where I want to live and how I want to live. Nobody can take it away from me, and it feels great!

People Building Community

Self-determination concerns lives intertwined in the everyday day flow of community. Whenever possible MPF holds trainings in city halls, community centers and other public meeting spaces to honor our commitment to building community and allies. Late last year, Oakland County/CLS sponsored a Local Leader training at Affirmations—a community center for lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender people and their allies. Michigan Partners for Freedom, as grassroots movement of people with disabilities, family members, advocates, and organizations working in the field of disabilities to make Self-Determination a reality for all Michigan citizens, believes that our quest for self-determination is so much larger than just us. Every connection moves us closer and closer to Community for All!





1325 S Washington Ave.
Lansing, MI 48910
1-800-292-7851 ext 105
www.arcmi.org



A facilitator is one who makes a process easier. Independent facilitation as a part of the Person-Centered-Planning is a value-based process that assists another individual and their support circle and responds directly to the dreams and desires.

April 22 & 23, 2010
The Art of Independent Facilitation

REGISTER NOW

Thursday 10-3 and Friday 9-2
United Way of Midland
220 West Main Street
Midland, Michigan
989-631-449 The Arc of Midland
www.thearcofmidland.org