



Michigan Partners For Freedom

Summer 2012

Moving From Self-Advocacy to Community Advocacy

So many people attended the 5th Annual Michigan Partners for Freedom (MPF) Summit in Lansing June 22, they couldn't all fit in one group photo! We happily put together a collage of the day's activities to document a great meeting!

This year's Summit was once again held in coordination with The Arc Michigan Conference. Most MPF Local Leaders and their supporters arrived the night before the Summit to partake in the conference dinner. Following the dinner and per tradition, the Local Leaders networked and participated in a discussion about self-advocacy which was facilitated by Wayne County Local Leader Ray Schuholz. *"I got people telling stories. Lots of Local Leaders got up to the microphone and shared how things in their life have gotten better over the years because of self-determination. We talked about freedom, inclusion and responsibility. People really enjoyed it."* Schuholz says plans are underway to network like this again next year.

The Summit focused on moving from individual self-advocacy to community advocacy and organizing. Morning presentations started with **"Nothing about Me without Me"** by Robin Sefton from the Washtenaw Association for Community Advocacy. Followed by a lively interactive presentation, **"From Me to We"**, which was facilitated by Pat Carver (Community Drive) and Wayne County MPF Local Co-



Coordinator Christy Jane Courtney (The Arc of Western Wayne County) and highlighted the power of shared voices. They emphasized the need for advocates to organize with like-minded allies when working for change.

Laura Hall, ADAPT Michigan Coordinator, informed the group about cross-disability activism. ADAPT is the largest direct action disability organization in the nation. It has been key in moving the Disability Rights Movement forward with tried and true tactics from the Civil Rights Movement. On the national level, ADAPT promotes the right for people to live in their own homes with needed supports as opposed to institutions, nursing homes, and provider-owned residential settings. Locally, they work on issues of accessibility, transportation, long-term care and housing.

For more information, visit ADAPT's website and click on the "Michigan" link.

 <http://www.adapt.org>

Self-Determination is Meant for You and Me



Last spring a grand turnout filled Hope Network's Community Room in Grand Rapids for the Michigan Partners for Freedom community presentation, **"Self-Determination is Meant for You and Me."**

Sponsored by the Kent RICC, the majority of the 115 attending came over from Hope's sheltered workshop "Work Skills Solution." Content included the purpose

of human service systems based on the principles of self-determination and how to make it happen with person-centered planning, individual budgeting, creative support and control of one's future. In the roundtable small activity, one individual summed up their discussion by saying *"Self-determination enables me to set more positive goals for myself. If you have good and positive goals, it will make for a better life. We can work, have friends, families and be independent."*

Looking for a Good Life!

Doesn't it seem that we all really want the same things out of life? Don't we all want something meaningful to do, to love and be loved, and be part of our communities? This remains the same whether labeled as disabled now or later. Therefore, starting in September, MPF will partner with the Michigan Family-to-Family Health Information and Education Center to offer regional trainings across the state geared toward parents and families of young people involved in the special education service system. These workshops will include personal stories, lecture, video, small- and large-group activities. Titled **"Looking for a Good Life"**, these presentations aim to assist parents and family members to learn how the principles and tools of self-determination can be used to create meaningful lives for their children's future.

For dates and location of training, visit the [Family-to-Family Health Information & Education Center](#) or [MPF websites](#)



www.bridges4kids.org

www.mifreedom.org

New Self-Determination Policy



Word has it that the new Self-Determination Policy and Practice Guidelines will be effective

October 1, 2012. The revised policy will provide direction that defines and guides the practice of self-determination within the public mental health system (as implemented by Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans/Community Mental Health Services Programs (PIHP/CMHSPs). It assures that arrangements that support self-determination are made available as a means for achieving personally-designed plans of specialty mental health services and supports.

According to Ellen Hyman-Alward, Self-Determination Consultant to the Michigan Department of Community Health, Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration, the new policy *won't be released until all of the PIHP/CMHSP contracts have been signed.* Watch for an update on the MPF website.

New Coordinator Joins Washtenaw

Self-determination advocates in Washtenaw completed MPF Local Leader training on May 17 at the Association for Community Advocacy in Ann Arbor. Each person learned how to plan and carry out MPF outreach activities in their communities and received a tool kit of items to use when making presentations about self-determination. This includes a MPF Local Leader's manual, DVDs, a flash drive with PowerPoints, business cards, copies of policy statements and other handouts. Additionally, the group welcomed its first MPF Washtenaw Local Coordinator, Calisa Reid; the Local Leaders look forward to her assistance throughout Washtenaw County. For many years Erin McMahon was MPF's solo Local Leader and says she's pleased Calisa will help coordinate the MPF in her

community. *"She is getting the ball rolling,"* says Erin McMahon. *"It's actually a very good thing for the new MPF Local Leaders here."*

Ms. Reid has always been active in her community. She's been a part of the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living, done home health care work, and created "Hope Shot with Pride" at Hope Clinic in Ypsilanti. Currently as MPF Local Coordinator, Calisa is pre-planning for a Person-Centered Planning meeting with a new Local Leader who has experienced frustration with getting heard. *"People don't think he can talk, but I think some may*



New Local Leaders in Washtenaw County. Coordinator, Calisa Reid, is seated in the middle.

need to listen better," Calisa presumes. Therefore they taped this new Local Leader's list of concerns and will share videotape at his upcoming PCP to clarify together in person with others what he is saying. Ms. Reid served as the Chair of the Washtenaw Regional Interagency Consumer Council for four years and recently handed the leadership over to the new RICC Chairperson Erin McMahon. Quite the leadership pair, Calisa and Erin.

More Than a President Being Decided in November

As more and more people with disabilities learn about self-determination, more and more people are directing their services. This often means they hire staff and in-home providers. Senior and disability rights groups across Michigan are working to put a proposal on the November ballot that would re-establish the Michigan Quality Community Care Council (MQCCC). The MQCCC would do the following:

- ♦ Oversee a registry that links home care recipients with pre-screened home care providers in their area.
- ♦ Require home care providers on the registry to undergo background checks to ensure safety for home care recipients.
- ♦ Give home care providers access to critical job training, so they can better assist seniors and persons with disabilities.
- ♦ Save taxpayer dollars since home care is significantly less expensive to taxpayers than nursing homes, according to numerous non-partisan studies.

For more information

 www.keephomesaSAFE.org



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Michigan Partners for Freedom is a grassroots coalition of people with disabilities, family members, advocates, organizations and other allies working together to build statewide demand for self-determination



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For information about voting in Michigan, visit the Michigan Voter Information website
 www.webapps.sos.state.mi.us/mivote/

Speaking of Power in Numbers

The United States Census Bureau says the number of people with disabilities is on the rise. They report 56.7 million people had a disability in 2010, an increase of 2.2 million since 2005. Nearly 1 in 5 people have a disability in the U.S.