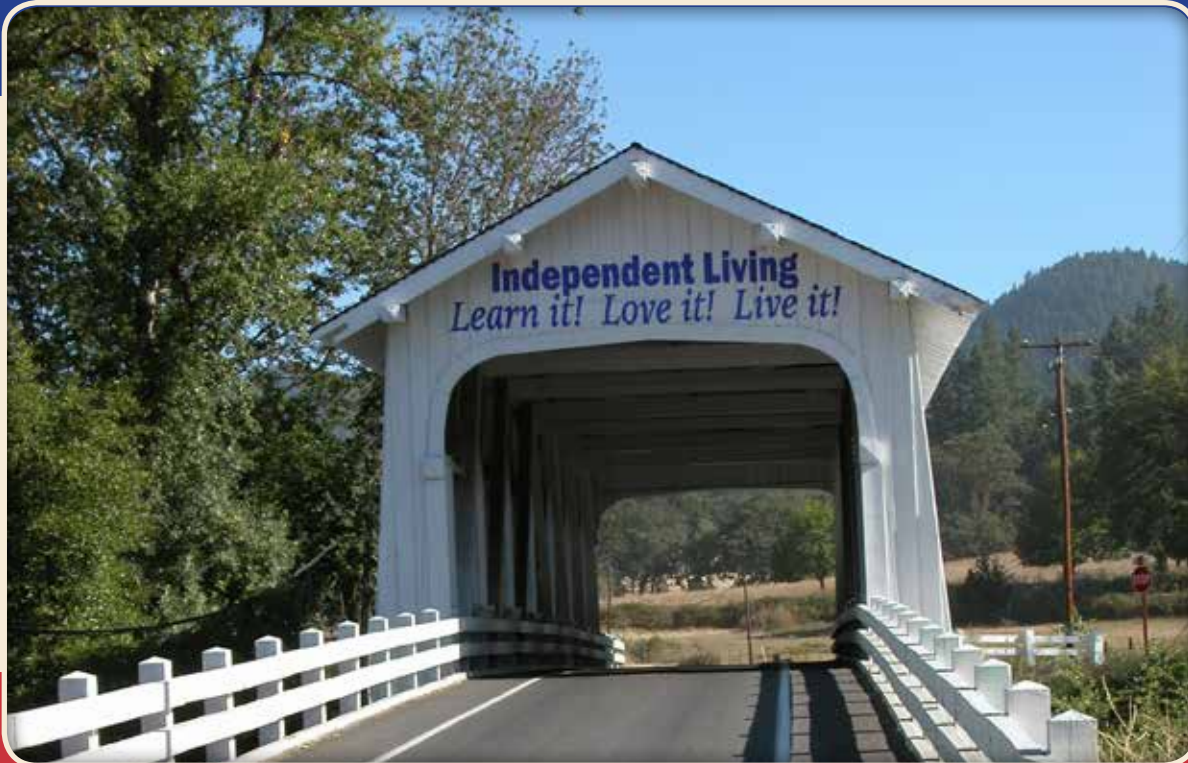




Association of Programs for
Rural Independent Living

2012

ANNUAL REPORT



Independent Living: *Learn it! Love it! Live it!*

Independent Living: *Learn it! Love it! Live it!*

Who we are

The Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) is a national grassroots, nonprofit membership organization consisting of over 260 members from centers for independent living, their satellites and branch offices, statewide independent living councils, other organizations and individuals concerned with the independent living issues of people with disabilities living in rural America.

Our Mission

APRIL provides leadership and resources on rural independent living. As a national membership organization, APRIL is dedicated to advancing the rights and responsibilities of people with disabilities in rural America by serving as a center of resources and by leading systems change.

Vision Statement

APRIL is the unified voice of independent living in rural America.



From left to right: Billy Altom, Kathy Hatch, Elissa Ellis

Staff

Executive Director

Billy Altom

Director of Operations/ Event Coordination

Elissa Ellis

Director of Training and Technical Assistance

Kathy Hatch

2012 Board of Directors

Officers

President

Liz Sherwin
Illinois-Iowa CIL - IL

Internal Vice President

Susan "Tink" Miller
Placer IRS - CA

External Vice President

Tiffany Johnston-Sparks
Walton Options - GA

Treasurer

Valarie Barnum-Yarger
Michigan SILC - MI

Secretary

Kim Gibson
*Tri-County Patriots
for IL - PA*

Members At Large

Gwen Gillenwater
*disAbility Resource
Center - SC*

Gary Maddox
Southwest CIL - MO

Monique Stamps
*Disability Rights &
Resources - NC*

Brian Atwell
LINK, Inc. - KS

Tim Sheehan
*CIL of Western
Wisconsin - WI*

John Johnson
Options CIL - MN

Frieda Kliewer
Sandra Beasley CIL - OK

Ronald Rocha
ARCIL - TX

Bob Maffit
Montana ILP - MT

John Nousaine
North Country IL - WI

Barbara Davis
Disability Partners - NC

Mike Beers
Summit ILP - MT

SILC Rep

Molly Gosline
Florida SILC - FL

Youth Seats

Nathan Todd
*disAbility Resource
Center - SC*

Sierra Royster
*Alliance of Disability
Advocates - NC*

2012 APRIL Supporters

2012 Conference Sponsors

AMERIGROUP, AVP
Advocacy & National
Partnerships
Virginia Beach, VA

Arizona Bridge to Inde-
pendent Living - ABIL
Phoenix, AZ

Arkansas SILC
Little Rock, AR

California SILC
Sacramento, CA

Illinois/Iowa CIL
Rock Island, IL

IndependenceFirst
Milwaukee, WI

Michigan SILC
Lansing, MI

Montana ILP
Helena, MT

SAILS
San Antonio, TX

University of Kansas
RTC:IL
Lawrence, KS

University of Montana
RTC:Rural
Missoula, MT

Walton Options
Augusta, GA

2012 Youth Support

ADA CIL
Raleigh, NC

ARCIL, Inc.
Austin, TX

Arkansas SILC
Little Rock, AR

Florida SILC
Tallahassee, FL

Georgia SILC
Atlanta, GA

Idaho SILC
Boise, ID

National Rural Assembly
Transportation Working
Group

Sandra Beasley CIL
Enid, OK

The Adaptables
Winston-Salem, NC

Yoshiko Dart
Washington, DC

2012 Exhibitors

CIL Management Suite
Q90
Springville, UT

ILC, Inc.
Joplin, MO

MiCIL - Tanabe Systems
Honolulu, HI

National AgrAbility
Project
Indianapolis, IN

Resources for
Independence
Central Valley
Fresno, CA

VPG
Allen Park, MI

2012 Accomplishments

Mobility Management/ IL Coaches Project

In 2010, Easter Seals Project ACTION (ESPA) initiated a grant program in partnership with APRIL and the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) to create mobility management/independent living coaches – people with disabilities who would educate and train mobility managers to coordinate and work closely with disability organizations in their respective communities. The primary goal of this program was to connect directly with the independent living movement, and have greater involvement and feedback from people with disabilities in person-directed mobility management. Mobility management programs seek to expand accessible transportation services and to connect these services to people in the community who require them. Person-directed mobility management focuses on the interests and

community connections preferred by the individual interested in the various transportation choices and options. The key to accessible transportation is to ensure that people with disabilities can live spontaneous lives, connected as they choose to community-based activities including healthcare, recreation/leisure, civic engagement, social & entertainment activities, education and employment. There are many facets to mobility management, and it is often unique to each respective community.

The first two years of the project were very successful, and included the identification of 20 IL Coaches from across the country. They in turn connected with over 300 mobility managers, including representatives from each of the 10 FTA regions. In this third year of the project, APRIL was involved in the creation of several reports on the analysis of findings from the proj-

ect, was a presenter in a Webinar sponsored by ESPA and presented at the NCIL Conference and at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Conference in Long Beach, California.

Kellogg Foundation's Rural People Rural Policy Project Finishes 6th Year

In 2006, APRIL was pleased to have been selected as a partner in the W. K. Kellogg Foundation's *Rural People, Rural Policy* (RPRP) Program. This multi-year, national initiative was based on the premise that rural America has abundant assets and that its brightest potential emerges when a critical mass of rural people are stronger and more organized policy actors. While funding for RPRP ended in 2011, the network in which APRIL participated has continued to find funding and to work together. The At-Large Network became NURV – Networks United for Rural Voice

2012 Accomplishments

and continues to meet regularly both by phone and face to face. APRIL has been proud to bring the voice of people with disabilities who live and work in rural America to this diverse group of people from across the country.

The approach of the RPRP initiative was that *systems*, not symptoms, are the focus of policy action. NURV has endeavored to maintain that focus. The initiative seeks the following outcomes:

- A common vision and vocabulary of challenges, opportunities and solutions that frame a consistent, more productive national dialogue on rural America.
- A nationwide network of rural advocates and organizations that collectively:
 - Advances local, state and federal policy that produces healthy, sustainable rural

communities with widely shared economic prosperity.

- Shares a platform that helps coordinate research, learning, resource development, expertise and communication.
- Includes people and communities historically excluded from the policy formation and decision-making process.
- Becomes a knowledgeable, creative, effective and powerful voice in rural policy-making.

NURV continued to work on five policy areas including healthcare, transportation, broadband, entrepreneurship and small business and immigration reform. The 15 organizations in NURV split into smaller working groups to focus on these areas. APRIL continues to be primarily involved in transporta-

tion, but has also worked with the Entrepreneurship and Small Business and the Broadband working groups.

Efforts of the transportation working group were recognized by the National Rural Assembly and it has now become the NRA Transportation Working Group. In support of that work, Billy Altom and Tim Sheehan were invited by Transportation for America (T4America) to attend a Washington DC fly-in that consisted of a day of training from T4 staff, meetings with hill staffers and remarks from Deputy Secretary of Transportation John D. Paocari. We were also featured speakers at the *Rural Transportation Showcase*, sponsored by Montana Senator Jon Tester.

A second White Paper on Transportation was developed that drew national support.

2012 Accomplishments

Conference

APRIL held its 18th annual Conference in Reno, Nevada in 2012. The over 360 attendees participated in 30 + events including topical workshops, plenary sessions and panels, a full day pre-conference and the first annual APRIL Youth Conference. These included presentations on everything from bullying to housing and healthcare strategies, from assistive technology to building a youth program in your CIL. Highlights of the conference included a keynote address from Mark Perriello, Director of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) who spoke about the importance of the disability community working together now more than ever, and a group of our NURV partners who challenged us to “Play Outside the Sandbox” as we think about partners in change.

2012 Awards Presented at the Conference

Earl Walden Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rural Advocacy Winner:

Mary Olson
– IL Specialist at the Summit ILC in Missoula, Montana. Mary’s creative mind has encouraged young people everywhere to join the movement. As an APRIL youth peer mentor, Mary has played a significant role in the development of print materials and a manual that was designed to help CILs build their own youth programs. Mary began a Master’s program at the University of Montana in September, 2012.



Mary Olson (left) and Kendra Hoar (right)

Linda Gonzales Award for Outstanding Rural Youth Winner:

Kendra Hoar has been an active member of the IL community nearly her whole life. At seventeen, Kendra has volunteered at Special Olympics and other youth groups, participated for several years in inclusive theater and been a disability advocate at school and in her personal life as a Big Sister. She currently volunteers at MILP, the local Center for Independent Living and recently completed her first year as a staff member of the Montana Youth Leadership Forum.

2012 Accomplishments

Youth

Rural youth with disabilities continue to make their presence known at the APRIL Conference and within rural independent living, through the Youth Steering Committee (YSC). For the last 7 years, APRIL youth have conducted an annual pre-conference. This year, APRIL decided it was time to give the pre-conference more weight and the youth held their first APRIL Youth Conference just prior to the main conference. The 2012 theme, “Flipping the Switch from Pity to Power: Inclusion doesn’t work without US!” in Reno, was a huge success, with nearly 35 young adults in attendance thanks to the generous support of several member CILs. Issues concerning growing the numbers of youth involved in IL, inclusion of youth with disabilities in everyday society, opportunities in the military and the history of the disability movement were discussed. A representative

from YouthBuild USA encouraged the group to explore their unique organization and ways they could become involved. The YSC plans to actively pursue grant and scholarship opportunities to encourage CILs to sponsor youth participation as well as plan for the 2013 conference. Youth-designed Conference t-shirts and sweatshirts were a hit and brought a nice profit. These shirts are available for purchase on the APRIL website.

Training and Technical Assistance

Peer Mentoring Program

As part of a cooperative agreement with the IL Net, APRIL mentors provided peer mentoring services to 12 CILs (2-day, on-site visit plus preparation/follow-up) in 2012.

In its fifth year of operation, the SILC-to-SILC Peer Mentoring project provided services to 3 SILCs in 2012. Similar to CIL-to-CIL, sea-

soned SILC directors provide on-site as well as follow-up assistance to SILCs who request services.

The Youth to Youth Peer Mentoring

program also got off to a good start in 2012. With a very small budget and the support of CILs looking for training, APRIL was able to mentor 5 CILs. Thanks to a grant the University of Kansas, RTC:ILs Dr. Glen White, APRIL youth were able to continue this new program. The purpose of the mentoring is to assist centers to develop their own youth-centered programs. These programs would bring young people in, not only for services, but also for the camaraderie of meeting with other youth with disabilities. Youth planned and developed training materials and information in issue areas including: Recruitment and Retention, IL History/Philosophy, Leadership, Transportation plus Sexuality and Healthy Relationships.

2012 Accomplishments

Staff Presentations

APRIL staff was in high demand throughout the year, speaking about APRIL, transportation and other IL topics in several locations. Following is a list of those presentations.

- APRIL ED, Billy Altom, made a presentation on SILC-to-SILC Peer Mentoring to SILC Congress.
- Altom spoke about APRIL and systems advocacy at a Consumer Advocacy Team Meeting sponsored by Texas Association of CILs (TACIL).
- Altom addressed the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the Leadership Conference Education Fund and the AAPD at a briefing on *Equity in Transportation for People with Disabilities*. The briefing examined civil rights enforcement, accessible transportation, job creation, workforce development and legislative priorities critical to the disability community.
- Board member and CIL Director, Tim Sheehan and Altom were invited by Transportation for America (T4 America) to attend a Washington DC fly-in. This consisted of a day of training from T4 staff, hill staffers and remarks from Deputy Secretary of Transportation John D. Paocari.
- Sheehan and Altom were also featured speakers at the *Rural Transportation Showcase*, sponsored by Montana Senator Jon Tester.
- APRIL's Kathy Hatch was a Webinar presenter for Easter Seals Project Action on the Mobility Management/IL Coaches project.
- Altom attended the third of four hearings held across the country to gather input in advance of writing the 2012 Farm Bill. Held at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. Disability was not a topic of discussion; however, Altom submitted written testimony for the record.
- Altom attended the North Carolina IL Summit sponsored by The Adaptable CIL in Winston-Salem. The summit had three tracks: CIL boards and SILC members, center directors and center staff. Peter Leidy and Altom facilitated discussions with center staff giving them an opportunity to learn from each other and to find information from national leaders.

2012 Accomplishments

- Altom attended the AgrAbility national steering committee in Indianapolis.
- Altom worked with the Montana Independent Living Project in Bozeman to implement their National Center on Senior Transportation grant: Enhancing Older Adult Mobility through Person-Centered Mobility Management. Altom and MILP staff worked with two local communities in developing transportation committees.
- Hatch presented on APRIL and the IL Coaches and Mobility Management project “Bridging the Gap between Independent Living and Mobility Managers” at the NCIL Conference in Washington, DC.
- Altom presented an IL History and Philosophy session at the Arkansas Youth Leadership Forum.

IL Conversations

APRIL coordinated and facilitated five IL Conversations, conference call-like trainings with facilitator, presenters and participants discussing current IL topics, throughout the year that included:

- **“Youth Transition: Back to the Future: 4 Core Services with a Twist”** for ILRU’s Community Participation project. Presenters included Michael Beers, Transitions Coordinator and Mary Olson, Peer Advocacy Coordinator – both from Summit ILC in Missoula, MT. Also presenting was Sierra Royster, Youth Advocate and Outreach Specialist for the Alliance of Disability Advocates CIL in Raleigh, NC.
- **“AgrAbility: Partnerships to Assist Agricultural Workers and other Rural Residents with Disabilities.”** Presenters were Bill Fields and Paul Jones,

National AgrAbility Project and Corey McGregor, Wyoming Services for IL.

- **“Sexual Violence and People with Disabilities: An Ongoing Issue.”** Presenters included Stephanie Sanford, JusticeNow Consulting, Shelby Grau, JD and Gary West, JD, both of Kansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.
- **“Bullying: Strategies and Partnerships for Change,”** presented by John Johnson of Options CIL in East Grand Forks, MN.
- **“Managing Arthritis for Independent Living,”** Presenters were Amber Wolfe – AgrAbility Project Coordinator, Arthritis Foundation and Karen Funkenbusch – Program Director, Missouri AgrAbility Project.

Audio transcripts of **IL Conversations** available on the APRIL website.

2012 Accomplishments

Other Accomplishments of Interest

- After more than two years of work, an official Memo of Understanding (MOU) now exists between APRIL/NCIL and the Veterans Administration to enhance services to veterans and find ways CILs and local/regional Veterans offices can work together to that end.
- The Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF) and APRIL submitted a Letter of Interest, describing our interest in conducting *Into and Around Town: Transportation Accessibility Update*. This project would build on and update the original report. DREDF had a significant role in creating *The Current State of Transportation for People with Disabilities in the United States* (2005). We were eager to re-examine the recommenda-

tions in that report to identify which have and have not been addressed successfully, and further, to identify the barriers that remain for people with disabilities in accessing transportation. The final product will emphasize rural and outlying urban areas, as well as inner-city transit issues related to subways, buses, taxis and other systems such as paratransit. (Contract was awarded and project began in late September)

- Staff distributed information articles daily on upcoming events, trainings, news, etc. through the APRIL membership listserve.

Check Out Our Website for...

- The Transportation Voucher Program Toolkit
- Current events
- Items for purchase
- Other Items of Interest



APRIL website at www.april-rural.org

Financial Report

Total Income:
\$409,500

INCOME

39%
ILRU

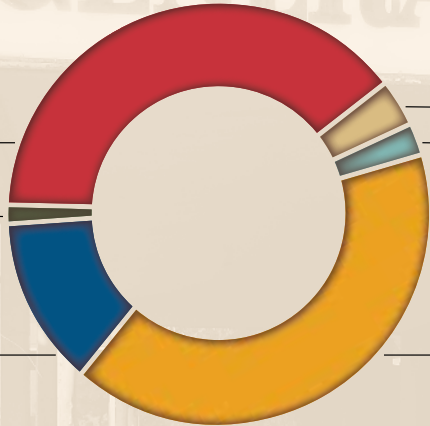
1%
AAPD

13%
ESPA / MM

3.6%
U of MT

2.4%
U of KS

41%
NON Fed



EXPENSES

Total Expenses:
\$294,725

11%
Fringe

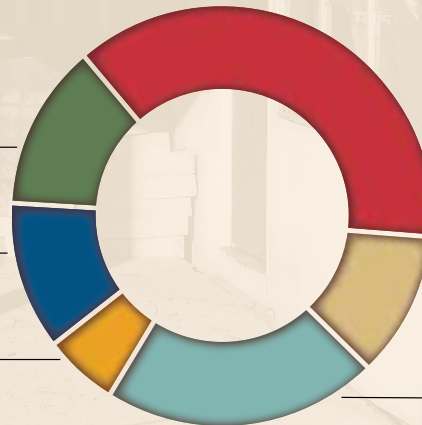
11%
Sub Contracts

6%
Travel

38%
Personnel

13%
Other

21%
Conference





Independent Living:



Learn it!



Love it!



Live it!

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