



Association of Programs
for Rural Independent Living

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

The Legacy Continues:

*With Great Power
Comes Great
Responsibility*

20th Annual National Conference
on Rural Independent Living



October 17-20, 2014

The Legacy Continues:
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Great Responsibility*



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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.

Staff

Executive Director

Billy Altom

Director of Operations and Conference Coordination

Elissa Ellis

Director of Training and Technical Assistance

Kathy Hatch

Director of Training and Technical Assistance

Mary Olson

2014 Board of Directors

Officers

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*CIL of Western
Wisconsin - WI*

Internal Vice President

Ronald Rocha
ARCIL - TX

External Vice President

Tiffany Clifford
Walton Options - GA

Treasurer

Valarie Barnum-
Yarger
Michigan SILC - MI

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- OK*

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*The Adaptables CIL
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Southwest CIL - MO

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Independence Inc. - ND

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PIRS - CA

Kim Gibson
DisABILITY LINK - GA

John Johnson
Options CIL - MN

Sidna Madden
*SILC of Oklahoma
- OK*

Sara Minton
*Crockett Resources
CIL - TX*

Bob Maffit
Montana ILP - MT

John Nousaine
North Country IL - WI

Mike Beers
Summit ILP - MT

SILC Rep

Molly Gosline
Florida SILC - FL

Youth Seats

Eddie Rea
CA SILC - CA

Sierra Royster
*Alliance of Disability
Advocates - NC*

2014 APRIL Supporters

2014 Conference Sponsors

ABIL CIL
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ARCIL, Inc.
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Crockett Resource CIL
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2014 Youth Support

ARCIL, Inc.
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2014 Exhibitors

AGIS Network
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AgrAbility
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ILRU
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Marin CIL
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New Vistas
Santa Fe, NM

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Jemez, NM

Q90
Springfield, UT

San Juan CIL
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Southwest ADA Center
Houston, TX

Tanabe Systems
Honolulu, HI

U of KS
Lawrence, KS

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Missoula, MT

2014 Peer Mentors

CIL PEER MENTORS:

Dee Barnard, ED
Access to
Independence, Inc.
Madison, WI

Michelle Crain, ED
Lifetime Indepen-
dence for Everyone
(LIFE)/RUN CIL
Lubbock, TX

Andy Curry, ED
Roads to
Independence
Ogden, UT 8440

Barry Fox-Quamme, ED
ILR
Portland, OR

Ron Garcia, ED
New Vistas CIL
Santa Fe, NM

Melva Heinrich
LINC
Twin Falls, ID

Roger Howard, ED
Living independence
Network Corporation
(LINC)
Boise, ID

Tiffany Clifford, ED
Walton Options for
Independence
Augusta, GA

Kathie Knoble-
Iverson, ED
IL Resources, Inc.
LaCrosse, WI

Gary Maddox, ED
Southwest CIL
Springfield, MO

John Nousaine, ED
North Country ILC
Superior, WI

Lee Schulz, ED
IndependenceFirst
Milwaukee, WI

Liz Sherwin, ED
IL/IA CIL
Rock Island, IL

SILC Mentors

Ann McDaniel, ED
West Virginia SILC
Institute, WV

Pat Puckett, ED
Georgia SILC
Decatur, GA

Brad Williams, ED
NY SILC Albany, NY

2014 Accomplishments

Conference:

APRIL's 20th Annual National Conference on Rural Independent Living was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The 340 participants were treated to numerous peer lead workshops and general sessions. We celebrated the passage of the

Workforce Investment Opportunities Act which moved Independent Living to the Administration on Community Living and established an Independent Living Administration. We also got an early start on celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act

by having the Road to Freedom bus stop by the conference. We had a renowned group of presenters including Aaron Bishop with the ACL and Tom Olin and Janine Bertram joining the youth in an empowering closing ceremony.



2014 Accomplishments

Awards Presented at the conference included:

Earl Walden Award for Outstanding Achievement in Rural Advocacy Winner:

Brenda Stinebuck has been with Spa Area Independent Living Services (SAILS), located in Hot Springs, Arkansas since 1992. Before becoming the Executive Director of SAILS in 1993, Brenda was the Coordinator of the Assistive Technology project. She has been involved in Arkansas' efforts to comply with the Olmstead decision since the beginning and was one of the founding members of the Olmstead Taskforce. She then went on to be appointed to the Governor's Integrated Services Taskforce where she served in various capacities including Chairperson. Brenda is currently a member of the Long Term Care Balancing Advisory Group. Brenda is an active and longtime member of ADAPT and has participated in numerous national actions. In September of

this year, Little Rock, Arkansas had the honor of hosting an ADAPT action to raise awareness and gather support for the Community First Choice Option (aka CFCO).

Linda Gonzales Award for Outstanding Rural Youth Winner:

Matt Berwick took on the job as Youth Director at Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living in Washington, Pennsylvania in 2012. Having acquired his disability at the age of 15 (now in his twenties), TRIPIL provided his first real IL experience and his supervisor encouraged him to attend the APRIL Conference that very year. A fairly shy and retiring young man, he quickly got into the APRIL spirit as he saw that the Conference wasn't just "a bunch of boring, old disabled people." He wanted to be involved and soon became part of the Youth Steering Committee where he was recently elected Chair!

In 2013, Matt received the Transition Employment Consultants' Silver Star Award for providing opportunities for people with disabilities to learn job skills and gain supports in the community. He was recognized as a person who went above and beyond at a typical job site, as he assisted students in succeeding in their job placement. Through these and other innovative strategies that can motivate youth with disabilities to become more involved in their own lives, Matt has brought fun to young people in his community, while introducing them to the importance of issues that touch all individuals with disabilities. Matt currently works for Three Rivers CIL in Pittsburgh, PA as an IL Youth Specialist and was elected to the APRIL Board at the 2014 conference in Albuquerque, NM.

2014 Accomplishments

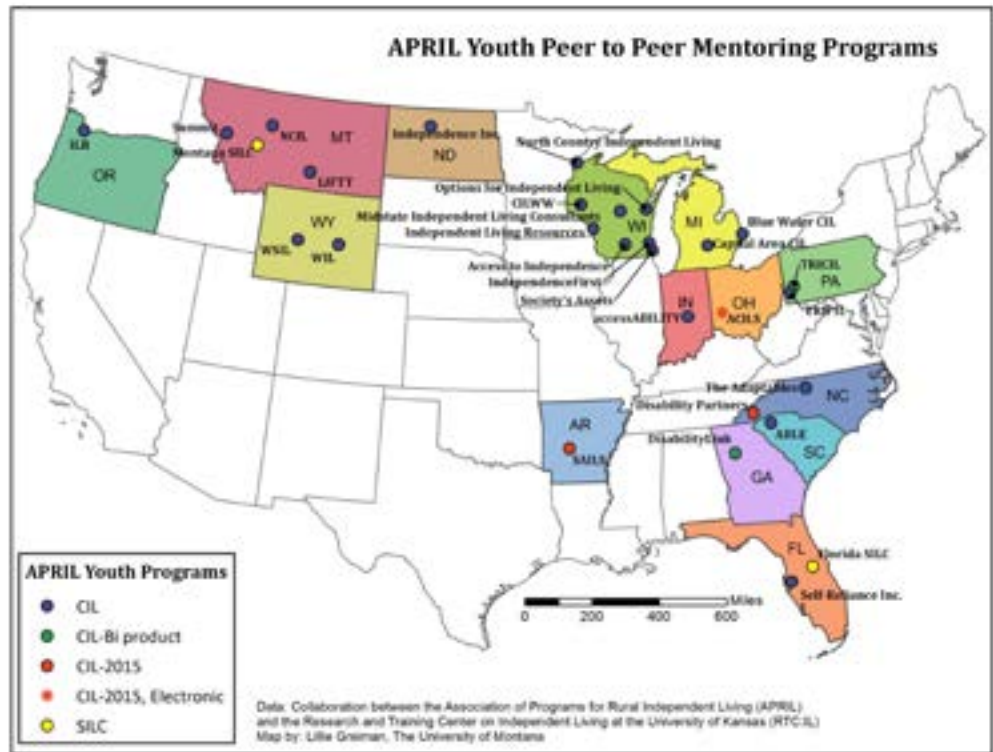
Youth:

For the third year in a row, APRIL hosted a two day Youth Conference. This year's theme was When Our Powers Combine. This was an opportunity to join forces with others to improve the lives of youth with disabilities and learn how to use your powers to become your friendly neighborhood superhero.

The history of the disability movement was discussed as well as the importance of clear communication in making REAL change come about. Participants created personal action plans to take back and use in their communities and heard from veteran advocates who've been part of the changes we see today. Rural youth with disabilities continue to make their presence known as members of the APRIL Board of Directors, at the APRIL Conference and within rural Independent Living. The Youth Steering Committee (YSC) plans to active-

ly pursue grant and scholarship opportunities and to encourage CILs to sponsor youth participation. They also will plan the 2015 Conference during monthly phone meetings. Youth-designed t-shirts sporting the Conference theme

were a hit and brought a nice profit. The Youth Steering Committee has really grown and has recruited a media team to do Facebook and Twitter in order to keep rural youth connected between conferences.



2014 Accomplishments

Training and Technical Assistance:

Peer Mentoring Programs:

As part of a cooperative agreement with the IL Net, APRIL mentors provided peer mentoring services to 10 CILs (2-day, on-site visit plus preparation/follow-up) in 2014.

2 SILCs also received technical assistance from APRIL peer mentors. In both programs, seasoned CIL and SILC directors provide on-site as well as follow-up assistance to those who request services.

2014 was another good year for the Youth to Youth Peer Mentoring program. With a very small budget and the support of CILs and one SILC, APRIL youth mentors provided technical assistance to the Montana SILC and 3 CILs in Montana, 2 CILs in Michigan, 1 CIL in South Carolina, and 8 CILs in Wisconsin.

Thanks to funding from the University of Kansas, RTC:IL's 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 updated and added to their training materials and information in areas including: Recruitment and Retention, IL History and Philosophy, Leadership, Transportation and Sexuality and Healthy Relationships. The program trained 1 new mentor to join the team. As a result of the Michigan mentoring, they created a curriculum in this community to utilize much needed disability knowledge with 9th and 10th grade students. Prior to being introduced to this opportunity, BWCIL had been a part of transition services which provides education for students who are close to graduation, but did not have any programs for 9th and 10th grade.

Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP) is the name of the BWCIL curriculum consisting of collective and shared information. At this time AMP is being piloted in 4 schools and 6 different classes, reaching out to 82 students. The future goal for the AMP program for the coming year (2015-2016) is to reach all high schools in the 5 counties BWCIL serves.

One Montana CIL is now teaching disability history courses in high schools and another in Montana just expanded their programs to include more community opportunities to youth with disabilities and integrating with other community youth programs. South Carolina's CIL is working on getting a disability history and awareness law passed utilizing the APRIL resources. They are also working on training the young people that were in their summer program on how to keep consumer controlled philosophy when consumers have guardians and on taking over control of

2014 Accomplishments

their Youth Leadership Forum in order to instill more IL Philosophy and equality into the program. Finally they are working on educating people with disabilities/young people about sexuality and healthy relationships.

APRIL Collaborations:

- Throughout the year, APRIL worked with NCIL to advocate for re-authorization of the Rehabilitation Act (WIOA). Together, they were successful in turning S1356 into the law of the land. This new law moved Independent Living from the Department of Education to the Administration on Community Living under HHS and created an Independent Living Administration. The dawn of a new era in Independent Living!
- APRIL developed a resolution with the assistance of our Board Chair Tim Sheehan regarding

base funding. For more than 20 years, there has been a consistent and coordinated—and periodically successful—national effort to convince policy makers to increase the level of funding, or public investment, which centers receive. The minimal level or, “base funding” level is what every center needs to maximally serve our diverse populations of people with varying disabilities, and our diverse geographies. There was a general belief, based on the initial work that drove this process, that the \$250,000 base funding standard set in the 1990s would prove to be wholly inadequate and sorely out of date. This proved to be the case. The new base level of funding rose to \$570,000. The take away from this work is simple: CILs across the country deserve a 21st Century Investment.

- APRIL continued to work with the United States International Council on Disability (USICD) to promote the passage of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). We assisted by sending targeted emails to states with a potential positive vote and asking them to contact their Senators, as well as sending letters of our own. Altom attended United Spinal Associations’ 3rd annual Roll on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, June 23rd and 24th. He was a part of a delegation of advocates educating our elected officials on the merits of Complex Rehab Technology and the CRPD.
- APRIL is a member of the National AgrAbility Steering Committee. Their goal is to enhance the lives of farmers and ranchers with disabilities.

2014 Accomplishments

- APRIL continues to work with Easter Seals Project ACTION and the Transportation Equity Caucus to ensure people with disabilities have access to appropriate forms of transportation.
- Altom was appointed to the Rail Vehicles Access Advisory Committee of the United States Access Board. The committee's role will be to make recommendations to the Access Board for revisions and updates to current ADA accessibility guidelines for transportation vehicles (specifically, the parts addressing rapid, light, commuter, high speed and inter-city rail). The Committee's primary focus is to identify barriers that preclude people with disabilities from enjoying all the amenities offered in rail cars, with emphasis on the car itself. Issues range from communications/signage to access to observation cars.
- Altom has also been active with the Amtrak Gap Mitigation Team. The RLE International design team is developing concept bridge plates and Superliner/Surfliner ramps. The gap mitigation solution has progressed very well and RLE's scope of work was increased this spring to include the design of an alternate platform strategy that includes a modular design and has integrated the gap mitigation device into the new platform design. All meetings were held at the RLE facility in Detroit, Michigan.
- Altom serves on the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) to evaluate proposals and select agencies to conduct research for the TRB. TCRP's charge was to select an agency to study the Impact of the Trend Toward Separate Statewide Medicaid Transportation Brokerages on Human Services Transportation Coordination.

APRIL Presentations and Information.

- Altom was the keynote speaker for the Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities 2014 Scholarship Reception. He had the opportunity to speak to young people with disabilities as they were preparing to embark on their journey into adulthood. The primary focus of his speech was for the young people to be engaged in their communities; Nothing About Us, Without Us.
- Altom had the pleasure of being one of the featured speakers at the 15th Anniversary Celebration of disABILITY LINK in Decatur, Georgia. He was joined by Kelly Buckland and Michael Beers to name a few. It was an enormously

2014 Accomplishments

successful event with nearly 300 people in attendance. Congratulations to Kim Gibson for a fantastic event!

- Altom recorded two advocacy songs (I Wanna Ride and The Road to Freedom) and posted them to the APRIL website.
 - Staff distributed information verbally and through articles daily on upcoming events, trainings, news, etc. through the APRIL membership listserv.
 - The website was updated regularly with current events, important dates and other items of interest and a Facebook page was created.
 - APRIL coordinated and facilitated 5 IL Conversations throughout the year. These are conference call-like trainings with a facilitator, presenters and participants discussing current
- IL topics. This year's lineup included:
- ADA 25 with Mark Johnson, Director of Advocacy, Shepherd Center
 - Veterans in Agriculture with Michael O'Gorman, Executive Director of Farmer Veteran Coalition; Paul Jones with the National AgrAbility Project at Purdue University, IN; and Will Milzarski, an Infantry Officer with the Army
 - No Wrong Question: A Smorgasbord of Resources for Day-to-Day Disability Issues with Mike Collins - Everyday Advocate – New Mobility Magazine
 - Expanding CIL Capacity through Engagement of Consumers with Mental Illness with Kathie Knoble-Iverson, IL Resources LaCrosse, WI and Dee Barnard, Access to Independence Madison, WI
- Community Project: Best Practices in Youth Programs with Rene Cummins / Sierra Royster of ADA CIL in Raleigh, NC, Molly Gosline, E.D. of FL SILC in Tallahassee, FL, and Jim Baker / Jessica Tourtellotte of SCRS in Downy, CA

Financial Report

Total Income:
\$367,380

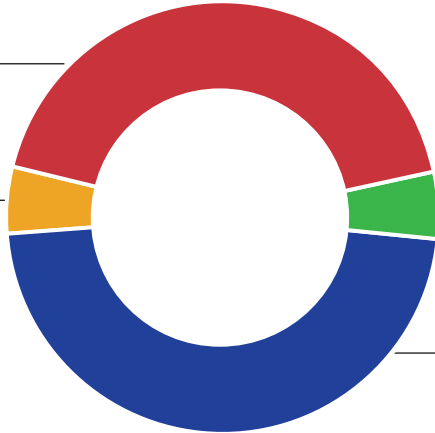
INCOME

43%
ILRU

5%
U of MT

5%
U of KS

47%
Non Fed



Total Expenses:
\$310,655

EXPENSES

17.8%
Fringe

45%
Personnel

22%
Conference

3.2%
Travel

12%
Sub Contracts

2014 Annual Report



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