



# AwareNews

Services for Independent Living, Inc. (SIL)  
26250 Euclid Ave, Suite 801, Euclid, OH 44132  
(216) 731-1529 (Voice/TTY)  
[www.sil-oh.org](http://www.sil-oh.org)

Summer, 2014

## ***“Celebrating Inclusion: 15 Years of the Olmstead Decision”***

SIL is pleased to announce the **“Celebrating Inclusion: 15 Years of the Olmstead Decision”** conference which will be held on June 26, 2014 at Corporate College East. This conference will commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the *Olmstead v. L.C.* Supreme Court decision, one of the most important milestones in the history of disability rights. In *Olmstead*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits the unnecessary institutionalization of people with disabilities. In the words of the Court, services to people with disabilities must be provided “in the most integrated setting possible.”

The conference will feature three key speakers: Lois Curtis, Derrick F. Dufresne, and Steven M Dettelbach. Derrick Dufresne is the President of Community Resource Associates (CRA), a training and management consulting firm dedicated to promoting full community inclusion for people with disabilities. Lois Curtis is one of the two plaintiffs of the Olmstead Decision; and Steven Dettelbach is a U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio. The conference will also include breakout sessions addressing issues impacting community inclusion for people with disabilities such as: ADA Compliance, Assistive Technology, Balancing Incentive Program, Employment, Fair Housing, Long-Term Services and Supports, and barriers impacting the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Community.

An attendance of about 250 consumers, family members and professionals is anticipated. For more information on attending, sponsoring, or exhibiting at the conference, please contact Laura Gold at [lgold@sil-oh.org](mailto:lgold@sil-oh.org).

### ***SIL is up and running...***

Please check out SIL’s new website and current information at [www.sil-oh.org](http://www.sil-oh.org). SIL staff worked together to create a website that is user friendly and easy to navigate, while still maintaining and providing the important information of our services and programs.

### **SIL Staff**

Molly Foos  
Executive Director

Lisa Marn  
Assistant Director

Kelly McDonald  
Director of Finance

Katherine Foley  
Director of Advocacy

David Polakowski  
Director of Development

Laura Gold  
Director of Access &  
Disability Rights

Randi Beasley  
Office Manager

Donna Lanier  
Independent Living  
Specialist

Shannon Monyak  
Independent Living  
Specialist

Sarah Reed  
Independent Living  
Specialist

April Holmes  
Independent Living  
Specialist

Anna  
Lisa Marn’s Service Dog &  
SIL Mascot

## **Holidays Are Coming Early In July!!!!**

SIL is beginning the holiday season a little early this year. Each year SIL provides consumers and their families donations of food, clothing, household supplies, and other gifts during the December holiday season. SIL would like to start planning for the Holiday Project in July by asking for donations to assist in the success of this year's event. Checks and gift cards, as well as, any items will be accepted to ensure a better holiday for our consumers. SIL also has a PayPal account to make a donation online. For more information on how to make a donation for the Holiday Project, please email David Polakowski at [dpolakowski@sil-oh.org](mailto:dpolakowski@sil-oh.org). Remember, all donations made to SIL for the Holiday Project or any event are 100% tax deductible.



### ***Meet the new SIL Staff!!***



Sarah Reed joined SIL in January of 2014 as an Independent Living Specialist. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Human Ecology and a minor in Psychology from Mercy Hurst College. Sarah started her career assisting individuals with intellectual disabilities to increase independent living skills. Her past experience complements her new position at SIL as she focuses on transitioning nursing facility residents back in to the community. Please contact Sarah at [sreed@sil-oh.org](mailto:sreed@sil-oh.org) for more information on the transition program.



April Holmes, is thrilled to be joining SIL as the new Independent Living Specialist. She recently joined SIL in April of 2014. April is a graduate of Cleveland State University and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work; and is pursuing her Master's Degree in Social Work also from Cleveland State University. She brings with her experience working with individuals with disabilities from interning at The Cleveland Sight Center and United Cerebral Palsy. April is currently working on the peer support program which works with individuals to accomplish goals of independence on an individual level. She will also be coordinating and organizing events and activities for the Abilities R US support group. For more information on the peer support program, please contact April at 216-731-1529 or [aholmes@sil-oh.org](mailto:aholmes@sil-oh.org).

## **SIL Annual Picnic will feature Paralympian.**



SIL will be hosting the annual picnic this year on August 27, 2014 at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The featured guest will be Paralympian Ryan Chalmers.

Ryan Chalmers was born with Spina Bifida and has used a wheelchair most of his life. He found his passion for track and field and basketball at the age of eight. Ryan has competed in world championships and represented the United States at the London 2012 Paralympic Games.

Ryan has a Bachelor's of Arts Degree in Recreation, Sport, and Tourism from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Since 2005, he has been involved in Stay-Focused, an organization that empowers teens with disabilities through SCUBA Certification and leadership.

In 2013, Ryan set out on an incredible journey. He pushed his racing wheelchair across the United States to raise awareness for the potential of all individuals with disabilities and to raise funds for Stay-Focused. On June 15, 2013, Ryan crossed the finish line in New York City, **completing the 71-day, 3,321-mile Push Across America.**

Ryan is currently training with the University of Illinois Wheelchair Track and Field Team for the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. He is a certified PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) Divemaster and the Director of Programs for Stay-Focused.

The cost of the picnic will be \$30.00 per person which includes entrance into the zoo, a boxed lunch, and a special gift. Limited space and scholarships are available. For more information on this event, contact David Polakowski at [dpolakowski@sil-oh.org](mailto:dpolakowski@sil-oh.org).

SIL is accepting donations to assist consumers wishing to attend the picnic. If you would like to make a donation to support a consumer(s) in attending the picnic, please make check payable to Services for Independent Living, Inc. and make a note of "Picnic" in the memo section of the check. All donations for the picnic are 100% tax deductible and will only be used to support consumers attending the picnic.





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#### ***SIL is Going Green!!!!***

SIL is working to improve and enhance the release of information by going paperless. The first step is to create an electronic newsletter. In order to do this, SIL is updating and collecting emails from stakeholders, consumers, and all interested in receiving information electronically.

If you are interested in going green with SIL, please email Randi Beasley at [randi@sil-oh.org](mailto:randi@sil-oh.org) with the following information: Name, address, city, state, zip, phone number, and a message stating "I want to go green!!!." This will also help to ensure SIL has the most current contact information for you.

#### ***SIL 2014 Calendar***

June 26—Inclusion Conference  
July 4— 4th of July, Closed  
July 25—Christmas in July  
August 26—SIL Open House  
August 27—Annual Picnic  
September 1—Labor Day, Closed

***Checkout SIL's website for the most up-to-date calendar and details on all events.***

***[www.sil-oh.org](http://www.sil-oh.org)***



### Coffee and Chats

SIL announces a series of informal “**Coffee and Chats**” to discuss current events and issues impacting individuals with disabilities. Topics will include areas such as advocacy, accessible and affordable housing, disability rights, and home modifications/assistive technology.

For more information on the “**Coffee and Chats**” or to suggest a topic of interest, please contact Laura Gold at [lgold@sil-oh.org](mailto:lgold@sil-oh.org).

SIL would like to thank Hillary Mason King, Executive Director of the Housing Research & Advocacy Center, for kicking off SIL’s first “**Coffee and Chat**” with her presentation on Making Your Rental Accessible Under the Fair Housing Act. Likewise, thank you to Beverly R. Charles, Senior Staff with Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge, for her fantastic presentation on June 5 with her presentation of Government 101. Both presentations were well received by attendees.



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# Peer Support/ ILST Corner

SIL's Peer Support and Independent Living Skills (ILS) Training programs are pleased to welcome April Holmes as our newest Independent Living Specialist. April will be doing a wide variety of programs with SIL including facilitating our Abilities-R-Us Discussion Groups, working one-on-one with consumers in setting and achieving their Independent Living goals, and coordinating Peer Consultants and Matches. Let's welcome April!

## PEER CONSULTANT TRAINING

A program of

Services for Independent Living, Inc.

### **Who is a Peer Consultant?**

A Peer Consultant is a volunteer with a disability who has successfully overcome barriers and met goals and who desires to help others with disabilities.

### **What is Peer Consultant Training?**

Peer Consultant Training is a six (6) hour seminar which prepares someone to become a Peer Consultant. The Independent Living Philosophy, communication skills, basic documentation skills, and other skills necessary to be a successful Peer Consultant will be discussed.

### **When is the Training?**

Services for Independent Living, Inc.'s next Peer Consultant Training will be Tuesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Lunch will be provided.

### **Where is the Training?**

It will be held in SIL's Training Room,  
26250 Euclid Ave, #801, Euclid, OH 44132.

If you need help with personal care, please bring someone with you.  
SIL staff cannot assist consumers with personal care.

Please RSVP by June 17 to April Holmes at (216) 731-1529 (V/TTY) or

**ABILITIES-R-US**  
A DISCUSSION GROUP FOR PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES  
SPONSORED BY SERVICES FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.

### **Discussion Topics**

#### **Self-Advocacy**

**Tuesday June 17, 2014**

*Katherine Foley, Director of Advocacy for SIL  
& Stephanie Arnold, Advocate*

#### **Benefits Outreach**

**Tuesday July 8, 2014**

*Cleveland Food Bank Representative*

*All meetings are held from 1:00pm to 3:00pm in  
the SIL Conference Room*

*26250 Euclid Ave., Suite 801 Euclid, OH 44132*

*If you need assistance with personal care during this time, please  
bring someone with you. SIL staff cannot assist in personal care  
(toileting, feeding, etc.).*

*If you have any questions or suggestions,  
please contact April Holmes at 216-731-1529 (V/TTY)  
or by E-mail at [aholmes@sil-oh.org](mailto:aholmes@sil-oh.org).*

**Are you a teenager with a disability  
between the ages of 14 and 18? Do  
you wish you had someone who has  
experience with a disability to talk  
to? Or are you an adult with a  
disability who is interested in  
mentoring a teen with a disability? If  
you answered yes to these questions,  
please call April or Lisa at (216) 731-  
1529.**

SIL is excited to announce that our new mock apartment is almost completed. SIL will be offering hands on Independent Living Skills Training such as simple cooking, kitchen safety, housekeeping, and much more. Call April at (216) 731-1529 for more information.

## Nursing Home Relocation Program Update

Lisa M. Marn, M.Ed., Assistant Director

SIL's Nursing Home Relocation Program has been extremely busy and our Transition Coordinators, Donna Lanier, Shannon Monyak, and Sarah Reed have relocated many consumers from nursing home settings to community-based settings in the past few months. We are proud to work with the HOME Choice Program and Access Success Project through the Office of Medical Assistance in facilitating these relocations.

SIL is also a provider of Community Support Coaching and Independent Living Skills Training through the HOME Choice Program. These are supplemental services

which are available to consumers after they discharge from a nursing home or other facility. They are designed to ensure the consumer's success in the community.

If you or someone you know is in a nursing home and would like to investigate options for community living, please call SIL. In addition, if you or someone you know is a HOME Choice consumer and would like to receive Community Support Coaching and/or Independent Living Skills Training from SIL, please notify your Case Manager or call SIL at (216) 731-1529 (V/TTY).

### ***Remembering Ramona Johnson***

SIL is sad to announce the loss of our Board of Trustee member and friend, Ramona Johnson. Ramona was an avid advocate, working to make society and her community more inclusive for people with disabilities. She had volunteered as a peer consultant for SIL prior to becoming a member of the Board. Ramona did her best to help those around her. She loved her community, her church and most of all, her family. She will be missed.



### ***Advocacy....***

On the **Advocacy Front**, SIL's Advocacy Coalition is coming together. Over 23 agencies and 50 individuals have had input in developing advocacy issues and priorities. Areas that have been identified as high priority are: Housing/ADA, Long-term Care Supports and Services/Health Care Disparities, Transportation, Emergency Preparedness and Youth.

Our next step is to break out in sub-committees, to address issues regarding the above mentioned topic areas. If you are interested in participating on one of the sub-committees, please contact Kathy Foley at 216-731-1529 or [kfoley@sil-oh.org](mailto:kfoley@sil-oh.org).



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SIL will be producing additional newsletters throughout the year, and all ads purchased will help to offset the cost. The staff at SIL thanks you in advance for your support.