



Independence, Inc.
e-newsletter



Building bridges, breaking barriers

maximizing the independence of
people with disabilities through advocacy,
peer support, training,
transportation and community education



Fall 2018
edition



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LMH Health Finds a Landing Spot Inside the Walls of Independence, Inc. for a New East Lawrence Health Clinic



Independence, Inc. is pleased to announce the upcoming addition of the LMH Health East Heights Clinic to our building here at 2001 Haskell Ave. (Pictured at left)

Earlier this year, LMH Health began a search for the right opportunity to expand primary care within East Lawrence, ultimately arriving at an arrangement with Independence, Inc.

"Independence, Inc. and LMH Health are complementary community organizations that both offer support and services within the broad spectrum of various life stages," said Jill Enyart, Executive Director for Independence, Inc. "That's what makes this partnership so great. Together we can provide so much more to the community than either could do alone."

Russ Johnson, LMH Health President & CEO, noted that community partnerships are increasingly important in advancing healthcare initiatives. "Our colleagues at Independence, Inc., have been very willing to work with us, and they are equally excited to expand access in Lawrence so that our community can have another vital access point for healthcare."

Read the LJ-World article...

Welcome to our New Intern and Front Desk Volunteer!



Kristina Jewell is our new Social Work Intern working closely with Daniel Brown, Independence, Inc. Independent Living Specialist. Kristina is from Overland Park and is in her final year at KU working on her Bachelors of Social Work. She has her sights set on eventually working in a hospital setting as a case manager.



David Vesco is our newest front desk volunteer and joins our fabulous support team that keep things running smoothly as our first points of contact with visitors and consumers calling or coming in to our organization. David has served in the military and worked in the private business sector before joining our organization as a volunteer.

Planning of the Independence, Inc. 17th Annual Disability Mentoring Day is Underway: Event is Just Around the Corner!

Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) is a nationwide effort to promote career development and skill-building strategies for youth with disabilities through a morning of hands-on career exploration and job shadowing. We follow the morning of mentoring with a celebration banquet for the students, their mentors, our sponsors, school staff & other community members & leaders. Independence, Inc. is the primary coordinator for this annual event and while it's not a fundraiser, it is our biggest event of the year! DMD is a community event to bring awareness to disability employment and how we can all, as community members, employers, educators and people with disabilities, work together to close the gap in employment inequality that

far favors the non-disabled population. We've put a lot of work into prepping and planning and are looking forward to another great mentoring day experience, October 23rd!

We are always looking for more sponsors, mentors and partners for this event! If you are interested in attending and/or learning more about DMD and how you can be involved or help support our work, *visit the DMD page on our website...*



October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and it's all about Changing Attitudes and Challenging Misconceptions. What can YOU do?

Every day, people with disabilities can and do make important contributions to America's businesses. They have the drive to succeed in employment, and the unique and valuable skills and talent needed to deliver value and results for their employers. Yet people with disabilities continue to face barriers, obstacles and even discrimination in employment and hiring practices and are far more under-employed than their non-disabled counterparts.

National Disability Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a movement with the sole purpose of reversing this trend by challenging misconceptions, changing attitudes and ensuring the basic civil right to gainful employment for people with



For information and education on what you can do to join this important movement and advocate for the employment rights of people with disabilities, visit the ***Campaign For Disability Employment website***, view, read and share the links below. and

disabilities.

More from CDE: What Can You Do?

☒ Autoplay next video



"Who I AM" (60 se...

CDE: What Can You Do?

challenge your thinking, your perception and your words and expressions concerning those with disabilities and what it means to be a valuable and trusted member of the workforce - with or without a disability.

Resources:

Above: The new "Who I Am" PSA features nine real people with disabilities. Rather than be defined by disability, these individuals are the sum of their many life roles, which includes working in jobs they love. To learn more about the Campaign for Disability Employment, go to whatcanyoudocampaign.org.

- ["Who Am I" video](#)
- [Campaign for Disability Employment Website](#)
- [Article: National Campaign Challenges Public to Improve Disability Employment Landscape](#)
- [Article: Join the Movement...](#)
- [Campaign for Disability Employment Fact Sheet](#)

Saying Goodbye to our Assistive Technology Grant Program and a Final Farewell and Happy Retirement to its Coordinator

The Independence, Inc. Assistive Technology (AT) Grant Program was a temporary, private grant-funded program that helped people with disabilities acquire needed assistive technology, home modifications or other devices to help them live independently and fully in their homes and communities. Through an application process, eligible participants were able to receive

things such as wheelchair lifts, ramps, bathroom modifications, magnifiers and so much more. The AT program ended September 28th with the final funds being dispersed. Since August of 2014, the Independence, Inc. Assistive Technology Grant Program assisted 530 Kansans with disabilities and their families acquire this needed assistive technology or modifications. Thank you Kansas Assistive Technology Cooperative (KATCO) board members for donating the funding that made this program possible!

We also wish to say a warm farewell and happy retirement to the AT Grant Coordinator, Mary Ann Newton for her excellent work in administering this program and working to improve the quality of life and independent living for people with disabilities across Kansas. "The Independence, Inc Assistive Technology Grant Program has assisted Kansans all across the state. I feel so fortunate to have been part of impacting so many peoples lives. I'm also so



fortunate to work for such a great company" said Mary Ann during her farewell party at her Emporia Kansas office (pictured above with Independence, Inc. Executive Director, Jill Enyart). We couldn't have done this without you Mary Ann, and we are grateful for your work!

**TOGETHER WE CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Contribute Now



Our Fall Campaign will Begin Soon!

Be on the lookout for information on our Fall Campaign - we need YOU to partner with us so we can continue to bring valuable programs and services to our

communities! For more information on specific services we offer, program highlights, news and information, **visit our website**. Ready to give now? Click on the link above. Every dollar counts and is appreciated!

A Note from the Editor:

Who and What is Independence, Inc.? We're more than you might think!

We are a Team

Here at Independence, Inc., we're a team of committed disability advocates, volunteers, community leaders, educators and professionals in the field of disability rights. We work together with a common goal - to work in and for our communities and everyone in them to ensure that the civil rights of people with disabilities are protected, including equal access to and inclusion in employment, healthcare, education, civic engagement, entertainment and all aspects of daily living with the same choices and quality of life afforded to the non-disabled community - all in the framework of the **Independent Living philosophy**.



We are Resources

The broad spectrum of what we have to offer and how we can assist is, in a sense, limitless. If you need it, express it and make it a goal, we can help. Whether offering a program, service or training ourselves or researching, making phone calls and referring you to the right resources, we are here to work with you through the process until your goal is complete. Discover more about our community resources and **Information and Referral Services**...

We are Educators

From money and household management to employment



Pictured above: Independence, Inc. Co-Director, Bob Mikesic, meets with representatives from LMH Imaging after a building and equipment CHEC accessibility assessment. Above Right Column: Youth Employment Program Coordinator Ranita Wilks, poses with an Independence, Inc. YEP! participant after securing employment with Baldwin Healthcare Center

We are Advocates

Our Independent Living Specialists work side by side with consumers on a daily basis, assisting them with self-directed goals in everything from healthy living, fitness and nutrition, to equal housing opportunities, accessible home modifications to employment goals and everything in between. In addition to one-on-one advocacy and support, we are in the community, assisting with adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act, assessing and educating service organizations, private businesses, housing and health care agencies as they strive to create inclusive environments accessible to all. [**Learn more about our Advocacy services...**](#) or [**Call or come in today!**](#)

preparation and organizational skills, utilizing community transportation to hiring and managing a Personal Care Service Worker (PCSW), our training is structured to focus on your needs, help identify and accentuate your skills and strengths and support your choices as we work together for solutions and positive outcomes. We will tailor our training to meet individual needs with a hands-on approach. One-on-one training, peer networking, and group training with Independent Living Skills Trainers are types of instruction available. And as with most of our programs and services, our Independent Living Skills Training is free! [**Learn more about our training programs and topics...**](#)

We Are so much More!

We are **Independent Living**
We are **Advocacy**
We are **Educators**
We are **Resources**
We are **Youth Employment**
We are **Accessible Housing**
We are **Public Transportation**
We are **Deinstitutionalization**
We are **Medical Equipment**
We are a **Kansas Tap Program**
We are **Braille Services**
We are a **computer center**
and we are so much more!

[**Meet our Staff!**](#)

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