

The Whole Story
 A
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 of The Whole Person, Inc.

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Bi-State Advocacy

David Robinson

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Do you know that The Whole Person Inc. is the only Center for Independent Living that advocates for people with disabilities in both Topeka and Jefferson City? For more than 25 years, our advocates have joined you, the people we serve, and traveled to Kansas and Missouri capitols during the legislative sessions to urge legislators to support bills that benefit people with disabilities. The recent sessions in both states were no exception.



Your efforts *do* shape legislative outcomes !

vide additional funding for independent living services.

We were not always successful in our efforts, but where we were successful we owed not just to the daily presence of disability rights advocates, but much more to the involvement of you, the people who are directly affected by the disability-

related issues our legislators considered.

You became involved through visits, letters, e-mails and phone calls to your legislators. You were united, and they listened to you!

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find summaries of some of the legislation that applies to you and/or other people with disabilities. Please take the time to check out the issues that apply directly to you. Celebrate the successes! Call up your legislators and thank them for supporting your issues. Resolve to be involved (or more involved) next year to turn this year's setbacks into next year's victories!

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What is probably not surprising is how similar the issues are in Kansas and Missouri. In the two neighboring states, there was legislation to protect the Medicaid waiver programs as well as pro-

Highlights of the MISSOURI 2006 Legislative Session

The following summarizes key disability and assistive technology-related bills and appropriations during the 2006 Legislative Session. Bills that passed must still be signed by the governor to become law. The summary is divided into two sections: bills that passed and bills that did not pass.

Bills That Passed

SB1084 - Sen. Gibbons **Sunset Date for CHIP and Non-Medicaid PCA:** This bill extends the sunset date to end the Children's Health Insurance Program and the non-Medicaid eligible consumer-directed personal care assistance program to June 30, 2008. This is the same date Missouri's Medicaid program is scheduled to sunset.

SB 834 - Sen. Nodler **Special Education:** This bill amends three sections of state law related to special education policy. It eliminates the current state resolution conference as the first step of due process and instead allows the new resolution meeting as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to serve that purpose. It also removes the 45-day timeline for completion of due process and incorporates by reference the requirements of the federal IDEA standards for such hearings. Lastly, it provides that evaluations of private school students suspected of having a disability under the IDEA will be conducted by the school district in which the private school is located.

HB 1762 - Rep. Wilson **Disabled License Plates:** This bill exempts a person from the four-year certification requirement for renewal of disabled license plates if he or she can present proof of permanent disability from the U.S. Veterans Administration. The initial application must still be accompanied by a physician's statement. The bill also adds advanced practice nurses to the list of health care practitioners who can sign verifying the need for the disabled plate or placard.

Bills That Did Not Pass

HB 1742 - Rep. Portwood **Working Disabled Medicaid Program:** This bill would have restored a portion of the former Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities program for a limited number of persons eligible under the program eliminated last session. This bill passed both the Missouri House and Senate but in different versions and time ran out before those differences could be reconciled. Funding was appropriated for the program and it is unknown if the program can or will be offered absent bill passage.

SB 1123 - Sen. Shields **Disabled Medicaid Managed Care Pilot:** This bill would have required the Department of Social Services to establish one or more mandatory Medicaid managed care pilot projects for recipients who were aged, blind or disabled. The pilot projects would have been implemented in one of the following areas: Greater Kansas City, Springfield or St. Louis.

SB 740 - Sen. Cauthorn **Medicaid for Sheltered Workshop Employees:** This bill would have provided that sheltered workshop employment income would not be counted against a person as income when applying for Medicaid. The bill did not include a similar disregard of income for a person with disabilities working in competitive or other employment situations.

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Highlights of the KANSAS 2006 Legislative Session

While agreement on a school finance plan continues to elude legislators in the wrap up session for 2006, some significant gains were made on items important to the Big Tent Coalition agenda.

HB 2352— Child in Need of Care (CINC) This bill is finally on its way to the governor's desk to be signed into law. It includes language that prohibits discrimination against parents with disabilities and calls for use of accommodations for the disability including adaptive equipment and support services.

SB 528—Related to reporting of statistical data regarding termination of pregnancy, specifically the tracking of women with disabilities. Even though the bill was passed, we were successful at eliminating any reference to women with disabilities in this bad bill.

HB 2712—Removes the right of parents to an automatic Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meeting when making material changes in services to a student's IEP. Advocates were successful in holding back this bill until further study by the Legislative Educational Planning Committee (LEPC) during the interim.

SB 480—Contained a policy change to allow for all Home and Community Based funding to be interchangeable between waiver programs.

As you can see, significant gains were made this year. We are most appreciative of those legislators and the governor who supported our requests to strengthen choice and independence.

If you or someone you know has positively or negatively been affected by these recent decisions, please contact your local legislator and either thank them for their efforts or share your concerns with them. To locate your Kansas elected officials, visit this web-site and scroll down to find your legislator under "Hot Items" <http://www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-legisportal/index.do>

Get involved in politics and advocacy as if your lives depended upon it.

They do,

and the lives of our grandchildren. You can be a soldier of justice. You can be a revolution of one. The dedicated, total effort of a single individual to struggle for the human dream is a monumental irreversible victory for the person and for humanity. That is real happiness.

That is the good life.

Justin Dart Jr.

MISSOURI EMPLOYMENT SUMMIT

The Network on Employment presents the **7th Annual Missouri Employment Summit**. This conference brings together people with disabilities, employers, employment providers, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, Special Education/Transition personnel, service coordinators, funding agencies, and others committed to increasing community employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The summit features national and local speakers who will share cutting edge, best practice information and strategies designed to support career development for people with disabilities.

August 8 - 10, 2006
Columbia, Missouri
Stoney Creek Inn
2601 South Providence Road
Columbia, MO 65203
(573) 442-6400 or
Toll Free at (800) 659-2220

For more details, visit Missouri Career Network website at: <http://www.mocareernet.com/index.html>
Then scroll down to and click on the APSE–Employment Summit Link

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY NEWS FOR CHILDREN

Assistive Technology Can
Open New Opportunities

The Kid's Assistive Technology (KAT) Program is again accepting applications for funding assistance for purchases of assistive technology for children, birth through age 20. Parents of children with disabilities apply for the KAT program. The program does not provide grants to schools. KAT is administered by Missouri Assistive Technology.

Examples of assistive technology considered through the KAT program include communication devices, adapted computer equipment, switches and mounts, hearing aids and devices, vision and Braille devices, mobility aids, vehicle access modifications, and some home access modifications. This is only a partial listing of assistive technology eligible through the KAT program.

Grants will be considered and prioritized based on the assistive technology needs of the child, and lower income families will receive priority. For more information or to receive an application form, contact Marty Exline at Missouri Assistive Technology at (816) 350-5281 or at mexline@swb.net. Interested parents may also use their toll-free number (800) 647-8557.

DEAF and HARD OF HEARING NEWS and INFORMATION

By LESLIE C HALL

The evening of May 5, more than 50 people attended the program presented by Missouri Relay/Sprint at Sprint World Headquarters in Overland Park, Kansas. The theme was, "With Sprint Relay, yes you can! Are you ready?" Discussions were on the future technology presentation's by Mike Baer, Sprint representative from Denver, Colorado, and Matt Gwynn, account manager, Relay Missouri. Several were involved in discussions on subjects like Relay Services, TDD, 711, IP Relay, conference captioning, CapTel, Video Relay Service, IP Relay, Wireless IP Relay, Relay Conference Captioning Interpreter with readout on the screen at the campus through line communicating between Colorado and Sprint Campus and Wireless IP Relay. Refreshments were served and carrying bags, pencils, T-shirts, etc; were distributed.

CAPTIONED MOVIES ACTION NEEDED!

JJ Jones

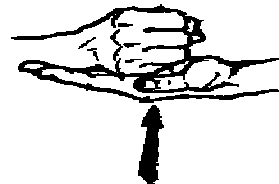
To all Deaf and Hard of Hearing movie fans: Many of you have called recently complaining that the captioned movies at the theaters are only being shown two times a day instead of three or four.

"What's going on?" you ask. "Why did AMC change?"

Here is my answer to all of you: AMC and other theaters are watching very closely to see how many people SHOW UP to watch captioned movies. They count the number of tickets you buy to see the open-captioned movie at AMC 30. They count how many times you use the rearview reflectors at AMC 20 and other theaters. They are finding out that we aren't showing up three or four times a day. How many times have you gone to a captioned movie and found that there were fewer than 10 Deaf or Hard of Hearing in the theater with you? It happens to me all the time! If the theater managers feel they are not getting enough people to see the captioned movies, they have the right to reduce the number of show times.

We, the Deaf and HH, must encourage other Deaf/HH to go to the movies and support captioning! If you don't go, the theatres are not making any money for those expensive open-captioned movies! It takes money to show captioned movies!

Again... please support captioned movies by going to the movies as often as you can! If you want the theaters to go back to showing movies three or four times a day, I suggest someone start a petition.



Please e-mail me at jjones@thewholeperson.org with any comments or questions, Thanks again!

News You Can Use

State Apprenticeship Programs

People with disabilities can be paid for learning a new profession when they participate in the Apprenticeship Programs offered in almost all states. From learning to be a bricklayer to learning to repair shoes, there are apprenticeship programs that offer training and job development for pay as well as experience in a job that someone might want to turn into a business. Enrolling in an apprenticeship program results in people gaining experience in the business they'd like to own as well as getting needed licensing or certification for occupations such as those in the building trades.

To find whether or not your state has an apprenticeship program and what occupations are covered, go to: http://www.doleta.gov/atels_bat/stateoffices.cfm

Lift Equipped Van For Sale

2005 Chrysler Town & Country Touring Minivan

Asking Price: \$22,000

Mileage: Approximately 4,000 miles

Lift is rear loading for wheelchairs or scooters only (without person)

Call (913) 268-6361 weekends or after 6:p.m. Mon.-Fri. for more information.

Have you ever been looking for specific information on a disability topic and not been sure where to look for the answer? The Whole Person web-site may have what you're looking for. Our web-site has been revamped and updated to provide links to numerous disability-related web portals. Check it out and let us know what works and what doesn't. What's missing that you would like to see? Your thoughts and suggestions will help us improve our site.

You can visit The Whole Person web-site at www.thewholeperson.org

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You may obtain *The Whole Story* in alternate formats by calling The Whole Person office at (816) 561-0304 (V or TTY).

ALERT! ALERT! ALERT!
From the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Department of Transportation Proposes Changes
in ADA Transportation Regulation
YOUR COMMENTS NEEDED



Has your transit agency cut back assistance to paratransit riders recently?

Could you or people you know successfully use the ADA paratransit service, if there was no assistance beyond the paratransit vehicle?

Your comments are needed by July 28, 2006. This is a new, extended deadline -- on important proposed changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transportation regulations.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is proposing positive changes that most public transportation providers strongly resist. Disability advocates' support is crucial to the outcome. Also, DOT seeks comment on other questions of importance to the disability community. Topics in this rulemaking include:

Should transit agencies be required to make reasonable modifications of policies, practices, and procedures in order to avoid discrimination, such as when providing ADA paratransit to individuals who need assistance beyond the vehicle to reach the facility door?

It appears that some transit agencies have responded to this proposed change by ALREADY stopping service to paratransit riders beyond the vehicle (that is, no assistance to or from the building). If this is true where you live, submit a comment to let DOT know.

If you have internet access and need more information from the Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF) to help you write your comments, visit them at www.dredf.org/transportation/transportation_alert_6-06.html. Please **don't** send in this alert or the DREDF comments themselves. Instead, **write your own comments**. Borrow ideas from the DREDF draft if you wish but add your own experiences and concerns.

At a minimum, please submit a brief comment supporting DOT's addition of a requirement for transit agencies to make reasonable modifications of policies, practices, and procedures.

Your comments must include the docket number 2006-OST-23985 and they are due by July 28, 2006. Comments may be submitted electronically.

DOT's full Notice of Proposed Rulemaking can be found at www.dmses.dot.gov/docimages/pdf95/387799_web.pdf

From DOT's instructions for submitting comments, You may submit comments identified by the docket number [2006-OST-23985] by any of the following methods:

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DREDF Alert

(1) Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov> (follow the instructions for submitting comments);

(2) Web Site: <http://dms.dot.gov> (follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site) [NOTE: DREDF found this the easier electronic option];

(3) Fax: 1-202-493-2251;

(4) Mail: Docket Management System; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Nassif Building, Room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590.

Comments must be received by July 28, 2006, Comments received after July 28, 2006 will be considered to the extent practicable. **You should include the agency name [Department of Transportation] and docket number [OST-2006-23985] or the Regulatory Identification Number (RIN) for this notice [RIN 2105-AD54] at the beginning of your comment.** All comments received will be posted without change to <http://dms.dot.gov> including any personal information provided.

Want to be more physically active? Use a manual wheelchair? Between 18 and 60 years old?

For more information on Project WOW! (Workout On Wheels!) call (913) 588-7382 or (913) 588-5000 Ext. 4-1324. Come see if it works out for you!

Medicare Recipients:

Do you have the wheelchair you need? If Not, we need to know.

Outdated policies prevent many Medicare recipients from getting the wheelchair they need to live independent and productive lives. Currently, Medicare will only pay for a wheelchair if you need it for use in your home. If you can function at home with a manual chair, but need a power chair to go to work, your doctor or the local grocery store, Medicare will only pay for a manual chair.

United Spinal is embarking on a major legislative campaign to ensure that every Medicare recipient with a disability has access to the "Right Wheelchair." If you don't have the right wheelchair because Medicare refuses to pay for it, we need to hear from you. Personal stories from members affected by this disastrous rule are the most powerful tool we have to make the United States Congress understand why legislation is urgently needed.

This policy affects you if:

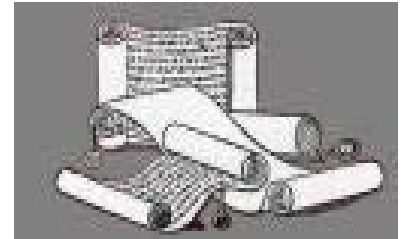
- . You are a Medicare recipient, AND
- . Medicare is not providing you with the type of wheelchair you need to fully access your community.

Does this describe you? If so, please contact Dan Anderson, legislative analyst, Public Policy, and help us convince Congress that it's time to fix this irrational policy. Contact Dan at 1-800-404-2898, extension 294, or e-mail danderson@unitedspinal.org

Missouri Consumer-Directed Services Program: Back to Basics

The State of Missouri has made numerous changes in the Consumer Directed Services (CDS) Program this past year. Even the program's name was changed, it was formerly called the Personal Assistance Services (PAS) Program. Fortunately some of the program's basic regulations and procedures are still the same. However in order for the program to run smoothly, it is very important that consumers follow these procedures:

- **Signatures on timesheets:** Both the consumer and Personal Care Attendant are required to sign the timesheet each day that the attendant works for the consumer. These daily signatures are required by the state and help ensure that the attendant will get paid for all days worked, even if the consumer is suddenly unavailable to sign the timesheet.



**Basics Remain
The Same**

- **Hospital Stays:** Attendants may not be paid for days when the consumer is in the hospital. Hospital days should be noted on the timesheet and no attendant work hours should be entered for those dates.

- **Deadline for timesheets:** Timesheets are always due by 5 p.m. on the Tuesday following the end of each pay period. Timesheets received after that deadline will be paid on the next regular pay cycle.

- **Attendants:** The state does not allow consumers to use their legal spouse or anyone under the age of 18 as their paid attendant on the CDS Program. A consumer who wishes to hire, rehire or terminate an attendant should immediately notify their Independent Living Specialist (ILS) at The Whole Person Inc. The ILS must confirm that all required attendant paperwork has been submitted before the attendant may start work.

- **Monthly contact:** The state requires that the ILS contact the consumer every month and make a home visit once each quarter. Consumers are responsible for immediately notifying their ILS of any change in address, phone number or living situation.

- **Medicaid eligibility:** Consumers are responsible for maintaining Medicaid eligibility and meeting their spend down, if applicable. Attendants may only be paid for days when the consumer is eligible for Medicaid. No attendant hours should be put on a timesheet for dates when the consumer is not Medicaid eligible.

If you have questions about your CDS services or about changes in the CDS Program, please contact your Independent Living Specialist.

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Missouri Bills That Did Not Pass

SB 877 - Sen. Kennedy, Accessible Home Tax Credit; The bill would have enacted a personal income tax credit for Missourians who had expenses to make their homes more accessible for someone with a disability. A credit of up to \$2,500 would have been available for eligible expenses incurred. The credit was structured so even very low-income persons with little or no tax liability could have benefited.

SB 1004 - Sen. Days, Sunset on Early Childhood Special Education; The bill would have eliminated the sunset on the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) programs (for 3-and-4 year olds) that was inadvertently included in the two-year sunset that was added to the First Steps program last year. The bill passed the Senate but when it reached the House the "preference" language that was removed last year was added into the bill. As a result, the bill was allowed to die in House committee. Both ECSE and the Part C program will sunset next year so the legislature will have to address both in the 2007 Legislative Session.

HB 1376 - Rep. Hobbs, Sheltered Workshops; The bill would have given a significant bidding preference to sheltered workshops and nonprofit organizations for the blind when the organizations were included in bids for state contracts. The bill did not include any preference for any other types of disabilities as some other states have done. This bill would have also required the state to increase payments to sheltered workshops. Another bill which dealt with the pay increase, SB642, also did not pass.

SB 787 - Sen. Klint, Sheltered Workshops; The bill would have required the state Highways and Transportation Commission to contract with sheltered workshops for the maintenance of state highway rest areas located within fifty miles of the sheltered workshop.

HB1870 - Rep. Kratky, Corporate Tax Credit for Hiring Employees with Disabilities; This bill would have created a tax credit for companies for hiring an employee with a disability. It was estimated that the bill could have cost the state more than \$160 million in tax credits per year.

HB 1036 - Rep. Sander, Captioning; The bill would have required closed or open captioning of electronic video instructional materials designed for use in schools and educational institutions. If a publisher knowingly failed to comply with the requirements, the entity that paid for the materials would be entitled to damages of 10 times the amount paid to have them captioned.

HB 1825 - Rep. Dusenberg, Local Television Captioning; This bill would have required that Missouri TV stations with gross revenues over \$3 million a year provide real-time captioning for viewers who are deaf or hearing impaired for all local news, weather and sports broadcasts.

For a complete listing of legislative initiatives that were disability related you can visit the following:

Missouri Governor's Council On Disability at <http://www.gcd.oa.mo.gov/legislation/updates.shtml>

Missouri Assistive Technology Project at <http://www.at.mo.gov/funding/2006wrapup.shtm>

Regional Transit Opportunity!

The Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance (RTA) would like to invite you to join the RTA's Regional Advocacy Network, which has been created to educate and update supporters on regional transit issues. Legislators need to hear from their constituents that regional public transit is important to them.

Currently, legislation is pending in both the Kansas and Missouri legislatures which would allow residents of Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri and Johnson, Leavenworth and Wyandotte counties in Kansas the opportunity to vote on a ballot issue to create a regional funding mechanism to support regional transit.

Please join the RTA's Regional Advocacy Network by visiting www.kctransit.org and clicking on Join the Regional Advocacy Network. It only takes a few minutes to join. You will receive action alerts and periodic e-mail about important public transit issues and will be asked to contact your elected officials and encourage them to pass legislation that would allow area voters to create a regional funding mechanism to support public transit.

Now is the time to make our voices heard about the importance of regional transit. The RTA needs your help in moving this issue forward.

Please join the RTA's Regional Advocacy Network TODAY and encourage your friends, family and co-workers to join too. For additional information about the RTA Regional Advocacy Network, please contact the RTA at 816-474-6808 or visit www.kctransit.org.

About the RTA: The Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance (RTA) is an independent not-for-profit corporation. RTA's mission is to provide leadership to support the development and maintenance of a comprehensive, efficient, high-quality, regional public transit system.

Together we can create a quality regional transit system.

Kansas City Regional Transit Alliance
1000 Walnut, Suite 224 | Kansas City, MO 64106
Phone: (816) 471-6808 | Fax: (816) 472-1823 | www.kctransit.org

Three Locations to Serve You

Our new location!

114 West Gregory Blvd.
Kansas City, Missouri 64114
(816) 561-0304

7301 Mission Rd., Suite 135
Prairie Village, Kansas 66208
(913) 262-1294

11015 E. 39th St., Suite 25
Independence, Missouri 64052
(816) 358-5310

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB

www.thewholeperson.org



The Whole Person, Inc.
114 W. Gregory Blvd.
Kansas City, Missouri 64114-1148

Mission Statement

The Whole Person, Inc. assists people with disabilities to live independently and encourages change within the community to expand opportunities for independent living.

The Whole Person, Inc.

is a private, nonresidential, nonprofit corporation. It has been a source of independent living services providing unique solutions to residents of the Greater Kansas City area since 1978.

Nonprofit Organization

U.S. Postage

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Kansas City, Missouri

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