Hello,

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well. In this edition of the newsletter we have a combination of celebrations of good work, a new WASILC Council member, and information on emerging statewide planning regarding COVID-19.

The WASILC Youth Committee has worked diligently for the past year to develop the Youth Transition survey, which launched successfully on March 2nd. The survey’s purpose is: Obtain county-specific data for youth transitioning into post-secondary education and training; Identify barriers, untapped resources, and gaps in knowledge to improve transition outcomes; Produce a written report including survey results and recommendations to distribute to schools, service agencies, and other interested entities; and advocate and influence system policies.

There are two versions of the survey: One to be taken by youth and young adults with disabilities, and the other by their allies. All are invited to take the survey at our website. Speaking of our website, I am excited to announce that our website recently received a transformative facelift. The site is 508 compliant and smart phone accessible! Check out the redesign at www.wasilc.org.

We are in the process of writing the next SPIL for 2021-2023. You will be able to make comments during the comment period, April 13—May 12.

And, Jim House—Disability Integration Manager, is actively supporting the Department of Health and the Emergency Management Division (EMD) in regards to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) response, providing critical guidance on Access & Functional Needs (AFNs) on behalf of the disability community. Now in its 5th year, CIEP has become well-known in the state emergency management response network. To access current and accurate information about COVID-19, visit our website.

Please be safe, wash your hands, and celebrate your accomplishments. No matter how big or small!
SURELY by now you have been inundated with news and facts about the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). We would like to provide emerging and relevant information for the disability community. We have set up a COVID-19 page on our new website. We will continually update with pertinent information for the disability community and the general public. Feel free to share with your family, friends, and networks.

Be Aware of Phishing Emails and Scams Related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Whenever an emergency or disaster situation of any kind arises, be aware that malicious people often try to manipulate our fears for their gain. News reports indicate that threat actors are taking advantage of the Coronavirus outbreak in new phishing email campaigns using public fear to increase the likelihood that users will click on a link or open an attachment.

In one campaign, the phishing email reportedly impersonates the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, warning of new infections and promising to provide a list of active infections in the surrounding area if users click on a link. Other phishing emails ask recipients to open an attachment to view safety measures regarding the spread of the virus. Cyber attacks often begin with phishing campaigns that try to trick you into downloading malware or providing account credentials.

Disability-Focused Planning

June Kailes, Disability Policy Consultant, shares tips for planning an emergency Coronavirus (COVID-19) response for individuals with disabilities, and organizations serving those with disabilities here.

Guidance for In-Home Care Providers

The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) has developed a guide for In-Home Care providers to assist the delivery of services. For information on their recommendations, click here.

WA Insurance Commissioner Waives Copays for COVID-19 Testing

Great news! The WA State Insurance Commissioner has issued an emergency order to all WA State health insurers requiring them to waive copays and deductibles for any consumer requiring testing for coronavirus (COVID-19). Read more here.

WA State Department of Health Coronavirus Fact Sheet in 11 Languages

For a quick, printable PDF fact sheet available in 11 languages, click here.

Five Things Everyone Should Know About How the Coronavirus May Affect People With Disabilities

Andrew Pulrang, contributing writer with Forbes, discusses five ways that pandemics affect individuals with disabilities. Read his article at Forbes.com.
Introducing Dion Graham, Sr. as our newly-appointed Council Member, serving as an Advocate of and for Individuals with Disabilities.

Dion is a long-time Transportation employee currently with King County Metro Transit, working as a Certified ADA Coordinator. His career in transit began in 1990 as a bus driver; right at the time that ADA was passed and buses were newly equipped with wheelchair lifts. Driving allowed him to truly see the great need for accessibility in transportation. “You’re the ambassador of the system. Riders with disabilities would tell me about the challenges they faced. For my part, I took those concerns back to my boss,” explained Dion. He has worked in various positions with Metro Transit over the years, and it is from these early experiences that his passion for the work began and he holds ADA certification with the Americans with Disabilities Act Certified Training Program.

His objective is “to create an environment that eliminates boundaries that deny inclusivity for seniors and persons with disabilities while establishing a community enriched with travel options.”

Dion was born in Brooklyn, NY, and relocated to the San Francisco, CA bay area when he was young. In 1985, Dion moved to Washington state and has lived here ever since. He is happily married to his wife of nearly 30 years. Together they raised four children; one daughter and three sons. Currently they live in downtown Seattle in Belltown, and are building a house in Union. His hobbies include scuba diving, traveling, golf, and especially sailing. He and his wife love sailing and dream of buying a sailboat and taking it on adventures all around the world.

Quarterly Meetings 2020

April 2
Due to the Coronavirus, this meeting will be held via webinar

* July 9-10
Central WA Disability Resources
301 E. 2nd Ave.
Ellensburg

* October 8-9
Center for Independence
7801 Bridgeport Way
Lakewood
INTERESTED IN JOINING WASILC?

We promote the Independent Living (IL) Philosophy by empowering communities through advocacy, education, and collaboration. This philosophy emphasizes the idea people with disabilities are the best experts on their own needs, deserving of equal opportunity to decide how they live, work, and take part in their communities.

HOW YOU CAN ENGAGE

There are two ways you can participate with WASILC. You can join a committee or apply to serve on the Council. Currently we are recruiting for three open Council positions. If you are committed and passionate about the values and mission of WASILC, you can apply here. For more information, you can either visit our website here or contact Kim Conner, Executive Director, at: kimberly.conner@dshs.wa.gov.

WASILC strives to ensure statewide representation of members who represent a broad range of individuals with geographic, disability, business, ethnic, service provider, advocacy and agency diversity. To apply, submit an online application to the Governor’s Office at: https://www.governor.wa.gov/boards-commissions/boards-commissions/apply-serve-board-or-commission