It has been a while since our last newsletter and there have been some exciting changes. I am pleased to introduce Avivette Coles as our new Executive Assistant. Avivette comes to us with a strong background in marketing, administrative skills, and a passion for disability justice. We also are welcoming two new council members, Karrin Morris and Naomi Marteeny. Learn more about our new team on Page five!

WASILC is highlighting a new section on our website which includes information on active committees open for recruitment. Please take a moment to explore the different ways you can participate with WASILC in it’s mission and share with your networks.

January is National Poverty Awareness month, and in the past year, many of us have heard of, or even experienced, greater levels of poverty than every before causing the rate of homelessness to soar. We want to raise awareness and call attention to that homelessness in the disability community. Without the safety, stability, and comfort of a home, achieving other markers of success, such as education, employment, and finances, is much more difficult. We’ve put together resources that have a hand in ending homelessness in the disability community for you to share with your network in hopes of bringing that number down.

Happy holidays to all and may the New Year bring you joy and restoration!
WASILC is continuing its dedication to improve the lives of people with disabilities, especially those living in poverty. Poverty is one of the most significant and most commonly cited social determinants of health. Race, ethnicity, and disability are all associated with poverty. According to the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, 38.6% of sheltered homeless individuals are disabled.

Both children of color and children with disabilities experience adversities from the environments in which they live. Of the approximately 2 million people with disabilities who do not leave their homes, about 560,000 do not leave because of transportation problems. African Americans with disabilities tend to rely on public transit more often than non African Americans with disabilities. Inadequate transportation is a major barrier to obtain and maintain employment, engage in community life, and participate in medical appointments and other healthy lifestyle activities (e.g., physical fitness activities, access to nutritious food, etc.)

The presence or absence of adequate housing is a significant health indicator for individuals with disabilities and for people of color. Both marginalized populations experience discrimination in housing, substandard housing, and high rates of homelessness.

ILRU is constantly updating its resources, you can find funding for housing, housing resources, transportation resources and more by clicking [HERE](#).
Key Programs through HUD and the CCD (Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities) Housing Task Force

Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities Program: Section 811 is the only HUD program dedicated to producing affordable, accessible housing in the community for non elderly, very low income people with significant disabilities.

Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers: HUD’s Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program helps very low income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities afford rental housing in the private market. About 1 in 3 households using Section 8 vouchers are headed by a non-elderly (under age 62) person with a disability.

National Housing Trust Fund: The National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) is a new, dedicated fund that provides grants to states to build, preserve, and rehabilitate housing for people with the lowest incomes.

CCD Housing Task Force works with Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to increase access to decent, safe, and affordable housing for all people with disabilities and to protect the rights guaranteed under the Fair Housing Act. To learn more information about the activities of the CCD Housing Task Force, please click HERE.
Looking for individuals with the vision of a world where people with disabilities can exercise their rights and participate fully in all aspects of society. All committees are established with purpose and members provide their knowledge, lived experience, and ideas with a disability perspective through the Independent Living Philosophy lens.

State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) Committee: Responsible for regular monitoring of the State Plan for Independent Living goals. This will include working with IL Network to collect data, track progress, and address applicable issues. The committee will report any recommendations for revisions and amendments to WASILC. The Committee will comply with the Rehabilitation Act Title VII, Chapter 1, subchapter A, Section 704. State Plan. The committee includes people with disabilities, advocates, and stakeholders from across the state.

Legislative and Policy Sub Committee: Responsible for educating and advocating within the Council, Legislators, and public and private entities in legislative and policy matters that affect people with disabilities and the IL Philosophy. The WASILC supports initiatives and legislation that strengthens IL Philosophy per the Rehabilitation Act. The committee includes people with disabilities, advocates, and stakeholders from across the state.

Youth and Young Adult Sub Committee: Provides youth and young adult voice to Council, disability community, and stakeholders in order to raise public awareness of youth and young adult Independent Living issues and the IL Philosophy. The committee includes people with disabilities, advocates, and stakeholders from across the state.

Click here for more information.

WASILC’s NEW EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Avivette Coles has worked in a variety of industries before settling into Non-Profit work in 2017. She brings over 14 years of administrative experience, a passion for altruism and philanthropy, and a desire to make the world better through service. Avivette is originally from the East Coast but has settled into Washington with her partner and two furry babies. She enjoys baking, spending time with her family, and giving back to her community.
WASILC’s NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

Karin Morris has been interested in working with others with disabilities since she experienced a Traumatic Brain Injury in her early twenties. Once she was able to return to work she began working with individuals with various intellectual/developmental disabilities. Through this work and her advanced studies, Karin learned about the independent living movement and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 2007, Karin began working as a Technical Assistance Specialist working with the Pacific ADA Center in Oakland, CA. From there she moved to Washington D.C to work with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division, Disability Rights Section as an Accessibility Specialist furthering her knowledge and expertise with the ADA. In 2013 Karin moved into positions implementing ADA policies first at a large health care entity, then a local government and now within Washington’s Department of Children, Youth and Families. Believing fully in the capabilities of all individuals with disabilities, Karin continues to work and volunteer in ways that seek to expand the full participation of individuals with disabilities.

Naomi Marteeny has been an advocate for people with disabilities for as long as she can remember. After being diagnosed with several disabilities and later another neurological disability, she has had to fight for her accommodations and rights. Growing up, she was met with constant challenges from others saying it was impossible for her to work, go to school and even to live independently. Time after time she proved to others that she could do normal things with some adjustments. It was perhaps all of these challenges from the past that spurred her to start two small businesses to help support herself, move into her own apartment and enter college to get a business degree. Now as a young adult, Naomi serves on two clubs as an officer, speaks on panels on disability rights, accommodations and how to go college as a student with disabilities. Naomi has served as a committee member for the past four years on the Youth and Young Adult WASILC council, and her goal is to further educate the disability community about disability rights, higher education and the workforce. Naomi hopes to be a leading voice to help those with disabilities enter their chosen paths with ease rather than resistance. In her free time, Naomi loves playing with her dogs, dancing and learning new languages.

Quarterly Meeting Schedule
Thursday, January 20th from 10a-2:45p: Online via Zoom
All are welcome to attend. Join the zoom meeting from the WASILC website.
WASILC stands in solidarity with the Black Community and all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. We fully support the Black Lives Matter movement and condemn systemic racism, oppression, and injustice. Achieving our mission requires us to educate and advocate for systemic changes for all people with disabilities, which includes the intersectionality of race and disability. We recommit to this vital work and will hold ourselves accountable to become better allies. We know we cannot elevate the disability community without elevating the BIPOC communities we serve.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT INDEPENDENT LIVING!

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. Learn more.

ABOUT US

The Washington State Independent Living Council (WASILC) is an eleven person, Governor appointed council that ensures Washington State delivers Independent Living (IL) services that are community based and consumer controlled for all disabilities. The primary purpose of WASILC is to monitor, review, evaluate, and maintain a State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). For questions about WASILC and its mission please contact Kim Conner, Executive Director, at 360.819.0672 or email: kimberly.conner@dshs.wa.gov.

The Coalition on Inclusive Emergency Planning (CIEP), a program of WASILC, is a statewide disability advisory group that provides technical advice on physical and programmatic accesses and effective communication strategies. Questions about CIEP and its mission can be directed to Jim House, Disability Integration Manager at 360.339.7435 or email: jim.house@dshs.wa.gov.

For general information on upcoming meetings, events, and resources, visit us at: wasilc.org.