Companies are continuously competing for customers and talented employees. The war for that talent in heating up. On average, employee tenure in the U.S. is 4.6 years, millennials leave after 2 years. Over 75% of fulltime workers are looking for new employment or open to new opportunities. Businesses are seeing more competition for talent, so in 2017 companies will be forced to focus more on employee experience through corporate culture and values in order to keep talented employees. Companies must continue to evolve their business along with their workers to remain competitive. 

To win in the marketplace you must first win in the workplace.

Doug Conant, CEO of Campbell’s Soup

March 2017 - May 2017  Vol. XX No. 2  Editor: Becky S. Teal

REACHing Out is published four times a year in December, March, June, & September at REACH of Dallas, 8625 King George Drive, Suite 210, Dallas, Texas 75235-2275
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Call us if you need any accommodations such as a sign language interpreter, Braille materials, etc.

**March 2017**

1. Adjustment to Disability Training @ the center 10:00-11:00 AM
2. Fort Worth Zoo, 1989 Colonial Parkway, 76110, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
3. Adjustment to Disability Training @ the center 10:00-11:00 AM
4. Freebirds, 4965 Overton Ridge Blvd, 76132, 1:00 - 2:30 PM
5. Meet @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM There will be refreshments!
6. Movie @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM There will be refreshments!
7. BINGO! @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM There will be refreshments!

**April 2017**

8. Adjustment to Disability Training @ the center 10:00-11:00 AM
9. Cowboy Chicken, 4972 Overton Ridge Blvd, 76132, 1:00-2:30 PM
10. El Fenix, 6391 Camp Bowie Blvd, 76116, Bring $20 so you can eat & leave tip for the server. 1:00-2:30PM
11. Center Closed (Good Friday)
12. Adjustment to Disability Training @ the center 10:00-11:00 AM
13. Center Closed (Memorial Day)

**May 2017**

1. Adjustment to Disability Training @ the center 10:00-11:00 AM
2. Fred’s Downtown Philly Steak Sandwiches, 5735 S. Hulen St., 76132, 1:00 - 2:30 PM
3. Adjustment to Disability Training @ the center 10:00-11:00 AM
4. Furr’s Cafeteria, 3233 Alta Mere, 76116, 1:00
5. Movie @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM There will be refreshments!
6. Meet @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM There will be refreshments!

The above scheduled activities are subject to change or cancellation based upon weather conditions or other factors.

**PROJECT RAMP - Fort Worth**

Do you or someone you know need a ramp built and/or handrails or grab bars installed?

The REACH of Fort Worth Resource Center on Independent Living offers accessible home modifications for low income individuals with mobility impairments who live in the City of Fort Worth. If you meet the following guidelines, you may be eligible for this type of assistance.

You must be a person with a mobility impairment.
You can be any age.
You must be a homeowner, live with the homeowner or have a letter from the landlord giving permission to make the accessible modifications to the home. (No apartments.)
Must provide proof of total household income and must meet federal guidelines for low-income households. (You must provide a copy of income verification and a Social Security number from each family member living in the home who is 18+ years of age.)
Your property taxes must be current

*FUNDS WILL BE USED ON A FIRST REQUESTED, FIRST SERVED BASIS*

If you need more information about this program, please call Alma Hernandez, Project Ramp Coordinator, at 817-870-9082
U.S. CIL Representatives Visit Nepal and Costa Rica CILs
By Julie Espinoza, Skills Training Specialist @ REACH of Plano

The Japanese IL Movement supports CILs all over the world. And they are planning on taking over the world - the Global Independent Living Movement. It is an awesome plan and it’s rolling forward with quite a bit of speed. Through my involvement in the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), I was identified as a U.S. Delegate to go to Kathmandu and share the U.S.'s IL movement. The CIL in Kathmandu has no funding from their government - they generate private funds however they can. They have created lightweight wheelchairs that easily fit under a motorcycle’s steering column and they have installed steps over the back wheel to transfer onto. This helps bring in funds and is the best way for people with disabilities to get around.

Logistics in Kathmandu: no reliable electricity, no sidewalks, no wide streets, no road repair, earthquake rubble blockage, over population, dangerous water, and no traffic rules that Americans are accustomed to. NO PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY.

So how can a barely funded CIL, non ADA accessible city, embrace the IL philosophy? I met so many people with disabilities facing our exact same issues, and then some, with our exact same philosophy and goals. They were hosting meetings after meetings with community leaders and business owners, pulling together as a team of volunteers, paid staff and town folks to help with even minor changes. Folks, I’m talking about staff and consumers who often don’t even have accessible bathrooms or homes. They are knocking on America’s door for help and collaboration and the world’s. And they are getting a response.

I went to Kathmandu to share our IL movement with them. I went to get acquainted with the Japan IL Movement and their world work. I went there to learn. I also wanted to eat as much food as I could try. I came back with respect for the wonderfull CIL comrades I have. I have a new sisterhood of women with disabilities ready to organize on our issues globally. I have a new exciting opportunity to stop teaching the IL History and make some IL History. I think my time period is going to be even more exciting than Ed Roberts’ and Justin Dart’s. It feels so bold to even say that, but I see it happening and I’m jumping in with both feet.

I was honored to be able to travel to Costa Rica to see what my global brothers and sisters in the IL movement were up to. They graciously allowed 2 U.S. delegates to come to their CIL in Perez Zeledon and also to participate in an IL Summit in San Jose. The Japanese IL Movement funded the trip and spent much time with the U.S. delegates as we toured and discussed for over a week. Costa Rica is a beautiful, rainy, friendly country and Perez Zeledon is a very fortunate city. Morpho is the name of the CIL in the town and they amazed me with how it epitomizes what a community with a CIL can look like.

The town itself was very accessible. Rustic style accessibility. Transportation was accessible and efficient. (Thanks to Morpho.) A new law was recently passed, their version of the ADA. This is entirely due to the work of the CIL. They studied their representatives, met with them and influenced the country’s laws and politics. Every year, a country host’s TRY. This is a very large advocacy effort and in Costa Rica, Morpho representatives went down a wet, winding narrow mountain road in wheelchairs with their attendants to gather PR for their needs and the passage of disability laws. It took a month! It was not safe. Buses and trucks sped by, darkness, storms. They slept under the stars. When they finally got to the city, the press and their country’s representatives greeted them and passed the law! Everyone survived. They were stronger and on fire.

We traveled back down the mountain to San Jose for an IL Summit. CILs and people with disabilities gathered for two days of presentations about their countries. Bolivia, Guatemala and more. I wish I could report that the IL movement is as well in other countries as Perez Zeledon, but it is not. I met with so many people that have fought physically for their rights as people with disabilities, and often lost. Each country showed videos of their fights for the IL movement. I sat there horrified after meeting with community leaders and business owners, pulling together as a team of volunteers, paid staff and town folks to help with even minor changes. Folks, I’m talking about staff and consumers who often don’t even have accessible bathrooms or homes. They are knocking on America’s door for help and collaboration and the world’s. And they are getting a response.

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Call us if you need any accommodations such as a sign language interpreter, Braille materials, etc.**

**March 2017**
- 1. General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 8. “Plant It!” General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 15. “Ides of March” General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 22. “ADA” General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM

**April 2017**
- 5. General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 12. “Can’t Hear You!” General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 14. Center Closed (Good Friday)
- 19. “Lighten Up!” General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 26. BINGO!! @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM

**May 2017**
- 3. General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 10. General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 17. “Can you remember when?” @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 24. General Support Group @ the center 1:00-2:00 PM
- 29. Center Closed (Memorial Day)

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**Youth Summer Camp**

**June 20, 21 & 22, 2017**

10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

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**Deadlines for Future REACHing Out Newsletters**

- **April 10th**: June - August 2017 edition
- **July 10th**: September - November 2017 edition
- **October 10th**: December 2017 - February 2018 edition

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**March for Respect - Disability Awareness Event**

**Saturday, March 25 @ 9 AM - 12 PM**

Main Street Garden Park, 1950 Main St., Dallas, Texas 75201

http://www.marchforrespect.org/

One mile awareness walk for the Dallas community to promote respect for those with intellectual-developmental disabilities.

Since 2003, the yearly March for Respect events have been bringing together people with and without disabilities in a show of support and respect. It’s an amazing and unforgettable event. Don’t miss it!
March 2017
15 Crafts @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM
15 Press Conference @ the center 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM on the issue of advocating with the Texas Legislature to increase the hourly pay of Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) who assist people with disabilities live in the community. Currently, PCAs who are paid through various contracts funded by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) earn just $8 an hour. This low hourly salary is making it nearly impossible to work as a PCA, thus prompting the unnecessary institutionalization of people with disabilities and denying them their civil rights under the ADA to live in the community in the least restrictive environment! Disability rights advocates around the state want the Texas Legislature to approve an hourly rate increase to $13 an hour.

If you want to help us with this important advocacy campaign, please join us at the press conference on March 15. If you need help in preparing and presenting your comments to the media during the event, contact Julie Espinoza at the center so she can help you prepare your written statement a week before the press conference. Please RSVP your attendance at the press conference by contacting Julie as soon as possible.

April 2017
12 Crafts @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM
14 Center Closed (Good Friday)

May 2017
17 Crafts @ the center 1:00 - 3:00 PM
29 Center Closed (Memorial Day)

Thank You!
The REACH of Plano staff are thankful for our consumers, interns and volunteers who helped make the Ed Roberts Day Luncheon a success. As you probably know, Ed is considered the Father of Centers for Independent Living and was one of the earliest and most vocal disability rights advocates for the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life. We also want to thank our consumers for signing up for several new REACH committees that will address various current legislative issues such as the attendant wage increase campaign and for offering peer support to new consumers learning about the Independent Living philosophy! 2017 is kicking off as a record breaking year of excitement and solidarity!
FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Donor Thank You - REACH recently received a $1,000 donation from Fort Worth based Sunair Products, one of the largest suppliers of mobile air conditioning service and compressor remanufacturing components in the world. The REACH Board of Directors, staff and consumers extend a big THANK YOU to Sunair Products' President & CEO Michael Sunday for his company’s generous financial support of our work.

REACH Board of Directors - Brooke Lewis was recently elected to the REACH board of directors. She joins the other 15 board members who are Ben Johnson, President; Julia Chalker, Vice President; Patt Bourland, Secretary; Gordon Meredith, Treasurer; Margot Boles, Ph.D.; Carla Forman, Board Member Emeritus; Emilio Gandara, Sylvia Hodgins, Larry Hughes, Robert Petty, Joe Rivas, Jose Santos, David Saunders, Joyce Tepley & Abu Villa, Ph.D.

DART Travel Ambassador Program - Did you know that Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) offers a FREE program that can help you enjoy all of the possibilities of using public transportation? The Travel Ambassador Program offers Travel Orientation Training and Group Training. During travel orientation training, riders learn the skills needed to navigate transit safely and independently. The instructions are given on a personalized one-on-one basis with the rider’s needs, abilities and specific travel plans in mind. Travel orientation training also includes an outing during which a travel ambassador accompanies the rider on a prearranged trip. Group training is similar to travel orientation training, but is conducted with a group of people who have the common goal of wanting to learn how to use public transportation. For more information or to schedule either type of training, call 214-626-8588 or email travelambassador@dart.org.

Consumer Feedback - As we do each year, we ask our consumers at each of our centers to complete a Consumer Satisfaction Questionnaire when their case is being closed. They have the option of answering each question on the form in one of five ways: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree. Below, for Fiscal Year 2016, are the responses we received from them to the following questions.

Question: I have been treated in a friendly, caring, and respectful manner by the Center’s staff. Consumers responding with a Strongly Agree or Agree: Fort Worth-100%, Dallas-97%, Denton-100%, and Plano-100%.

Question: The Center's staff responded to me and provided services in a timely manner. Consumers responding with a Strongly Agree or Agree: Fort Worth-96%, Dallas-100%, Denton-100%, and Plano-100%.

Question: The Center’s staff met my needs. Consumers responding with a Strongly Agree or Agree: Fort Worth-96%, Dallas-100%, Denton-100%, and Plano-90%.

Question: I am satisfied with the services provided by the Center and staff. Consumers responding with a Strongly Agree or Agree: Fort Worth-98%, Dallas-100%, Denton-100%, and Plano-95%.

Question: The Center’s services and staff provided me with information to help me make informed choices. Consumers responding with a Strongly Agree or Agree: Fort Worth-91%, Dallas-100%, Denton-100%, and Plano-100%.

Question: The Center’s staff encouraged me to make decisions so that I could live more independently. Consumers responding with a Strongly Agree or Agree: Fort Worth-86%, Dallas-97%, Denton-100%, and Plano-90%.

Program Name Change - The Dallas consumers who participate in the twice monthly Adjustment to Disability group training sessions have decided to rename the program Independence & Beyond.

New Employee - In November, Sierrah Willis-Winbush, REACH of Plano’s Community Living & Youth Transition Specialist, left REACH’s employ to pursue other career opportunities. We wish Sierrah the best in her new career. In January, we welcomed Clarence Russeau to the REACH Team as the new Community Living & Youth Transition Specialist at the Plano center.

Happy Spring! Charlotte Stewart
REACHing Out Newsletter

Below are the prices for placing an advertisement in the REACHing Out newsletter. The newsletter is published quarterly in December, March, June, and September. The newsletter is sent/distributed to 2,500+ readers living primarily in Tarrant, Dallas, Denton & Collin Counties and is available online at www.reachcils.org.

**BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL AD SIZES:**

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If you have any questions, please call Becky Teal, newsletter editor, at REACH of Denton 940-383-1062 or contact her by email at reachden@reachcils.org. These advertising rates may change without prior notice.

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**Words to Live by!!!**

The secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age.

Lucille Ball

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**ADAPTIVE MOBILITY of the SOUTHWEST LLC**

Jim Chavez, Mobility Consultant- Proprietor

817-235-0670

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The REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living are members of the Texas Association of Centers for Independent Living, the National Council on Independent Living, and the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities.
CARING to HELP

Honor your loved ones with a gift to the REACH Resource Centers on Independent Living. Donations in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, wedding, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, etc. will help REACH continue its work in providing an array of independent living services to North Texans with disabilities.

Enclosed is my contribution of $____________

In Memory or Honor of (Name): _________________________________________

Check one: Memorial ____ Birthday____ Anniversary____ Wedding______ or Other (Explain)______________________________

Send acknowledgement to (Name, Address, City, State & Zip Code):

_____________________________________________________________________

From (Your Name, Address, City, State & Zip Code):

_____________________________________________________________________

Make checks payable to REACH, Inc. and mail with this form to 1000 Macon Street, Suite 200, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4527. THANK YOU FOR YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

The contents of this newsletter were developed, in part, under grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC). The contents of this newsletter do not, however, necessarily represent the policies of HHS or HHSC and you should not assume endorsement by either the federal or state government.

REACH receives a majority of its funding to operate the centers from grants from HHS and HHSC. REACH of Denton receives 100% of its funding ($208,765) from HHS; REACH of Fort Worth receives 100% of its funding ($250,000) from HHSC; REACH of Dallas receives 94% of its funding ($402,694) from HHS and 6% ($24,559) from HHSC; and REACH of Plano receives 100% of its funding ($250,000) from HHSC.

JUST A REMINDER

REACH generates additional funds to enhance its mission by participating in the Tom Thumb, Kroger and Amazon Smile donor programs. Each company allows its customers to register so that donations go to a nonprofit organization that the customer supports. Then every time a purchase is made by the customer, the nonprofit receives credit for the total amount of the purchase. The Tom Thumb, Kroger and Amazon companies then periodically issue a donation check to REACH for a percentage of the total of its supporters’ purchases.

If you and/or your family and friends shop at or online at any or all of these companies and would like to make sure that REACH is able to continue providing services to North Texans with disabilities, please call any of the REACH offices for more information on how to enroll in these donor programs.