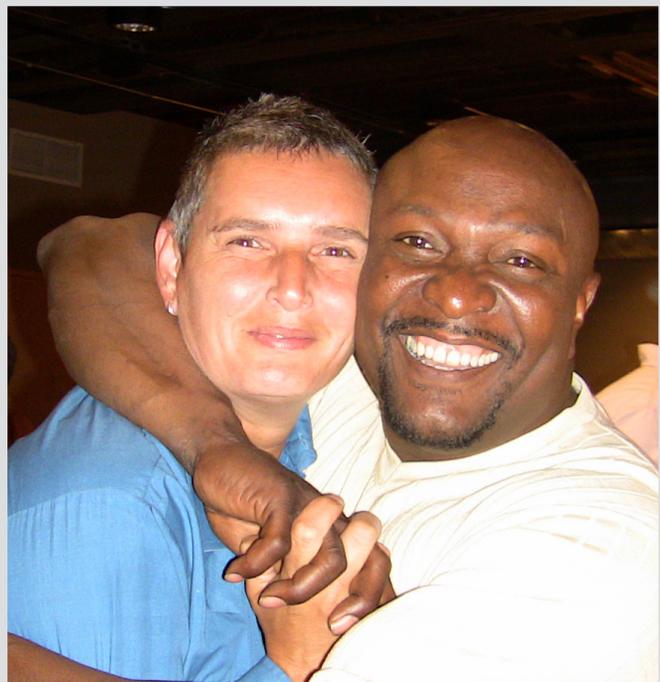




**M I N N E S O T A**  
**STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL**  
2013 Annual Report ■ October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013



## WHAT IS THE MINNESOTA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL?

The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council (MNSILC) is authorized under the federal Rehabilitation Act, and appointed by the governor, to provide guidance to Minnesota's independent living services. The council's primary responsibilities include the development and preparation of a State Plan for Independent Living and to monitor, review, and evaluate the implementation of the plan. MNSILC also coordinates activities with the State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs) and other councils that address the needs and issues of specific disability populations. All regularly scheduled meetings of the council are open to the public, as are its records, reports, and activities.

## VISION OF THE STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

By the year 2020 Minnesota will be providing a comprehensive range of independent living services which empowers persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible.

## MISSION OF THE MINNESOTA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

The Minnesota SILC shall advance the philosophy of independent living, maximizing the choices, leadership, empowerment, independence and productivity of persons with disabilities, and promote the integration and full inclusion of persons with disabilities into American society.

## STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL MEMBER ROSTER

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Connie Lee Berg<br>121 Project Representative | Kathleen Hagen<br>Advocate                 |
| Heidi Johnson<br>Advocate                     | Michele Kyler<br>Public Member             |
| Idelle Longman<br>Parent                      | Linda Lingen<br>State Agency               |
| Larry Lura<br>Public Member                   | Mark Mertens<br>Other State Agency         |
| Cynthia Moore<br>Public Member                | William Negaard<br>Business Representative |
| Suzanne Renfroe<br>Parent                     | Ann Roscoe<br>MNSCOD Member                |
| Sean Roy<br>Other Service Provider            | Sharla Scullen<br>Public Member            |
| David Sherwood-Gabrielson<br>State Agency     | Randy Sorenson<br>CIL Director             |
| Julia Washenberger<br>Advocate                | Joan Willshire<br>MSCOD Member             |



## CONSIDER BECOMING A MEMBER OF MNSILC

If you are interested in statewide independent living services and supports, MNSILC provides an opportunity for you to contribute. MNSILC members are appointed by the governor and consist of community volunteers. Membership must always include persons with a broad range of disabilities, as well as at least one director of a 121 project (Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Program), and at least one director of a Center for Independent Living. MNSILC may include representation from more than one Center for Independent Living, parents and legal guardians of individuals with disabilities, advocates of and for individuals with disabilities, representatives from private businesses or organizations that provide services for individuals with disabilities, and other appropriate individuals.

*For more information about the council go to [www.mnsilc.org](http://www.mnsilc.org) or contact Pam Taylor: Phone 612-518-1497 or Fax 651-297-5159.*

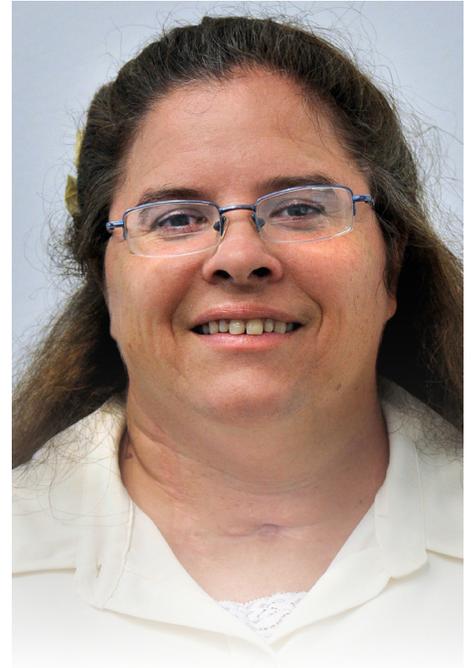
The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council had a busy year 2012-2013. Members spent a good deal of time on organizational vitality activities, establishing a foundation to direct the governance of the council, improving communication with our appointing office, and increased collaboration with other agencies to engage our communities. In addition, the council watched changes in the state closely.

Many of these changes are happening around issues that greatly impact persons with disabilities. Dollars available continue to remain stagnant for some services, while others decrease. Successful independent living requires access to a wide range of supports and services. The Olmstead Plan put forth this year addresses many of the barriers to independent living. The council followed the development of the Olmstead Plan closely for the inclusion of Minnesota's eight Centers for Independent Living. The centers already offer people with disabilities in Minnesota exemplary support for independent living. Their expertise will be invaluable as Minnesota moves forward in implementing Olmstead.

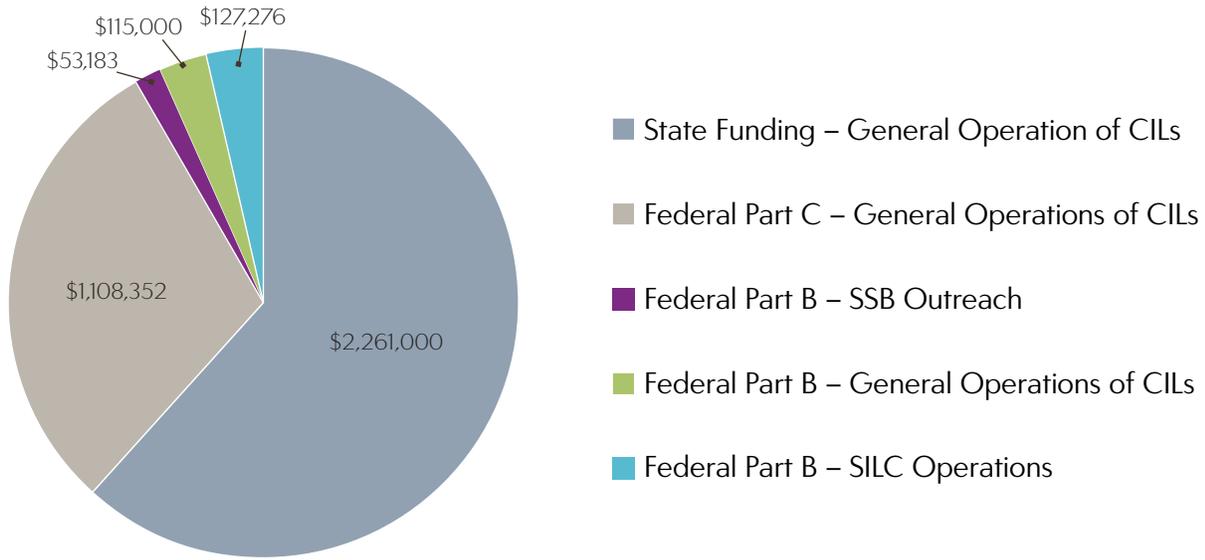
The council thanks many community members for participating as we gathered information through community input and forums to develop our goals and objectives for the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The community across the state was offered opportunities to comment on the draft 2014-2016 State Plan for Independent Living. Council members devoted many hours preparing the SPIL. The energy and thoughtfulness put into this plan will result in successful forward movement for Minnesota in the provision of independent living services and supports. The 2014-2016 State Plan for Independent Living was finalized by the council in June and approved by the Rehabilitation Services Administration in September.

The Olmstead Plan and coming changes to services that support independent living magnify the relevance of the Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council and Centers for Independent Living. The council is energized by its role in achieving increased opportunities for independent living to all Minnesotans with disabilities.

*Mickey Kyler*  
*MNSILC Chairperson*



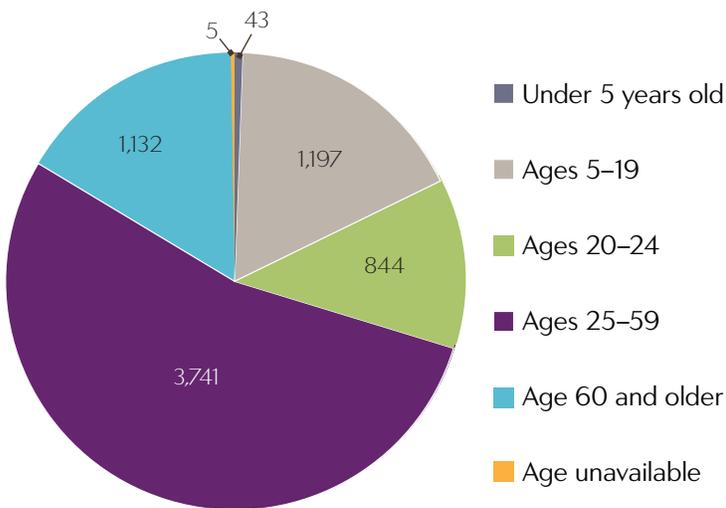
### INDEPENDENT LIVING FUNDING DISTRIBUTION



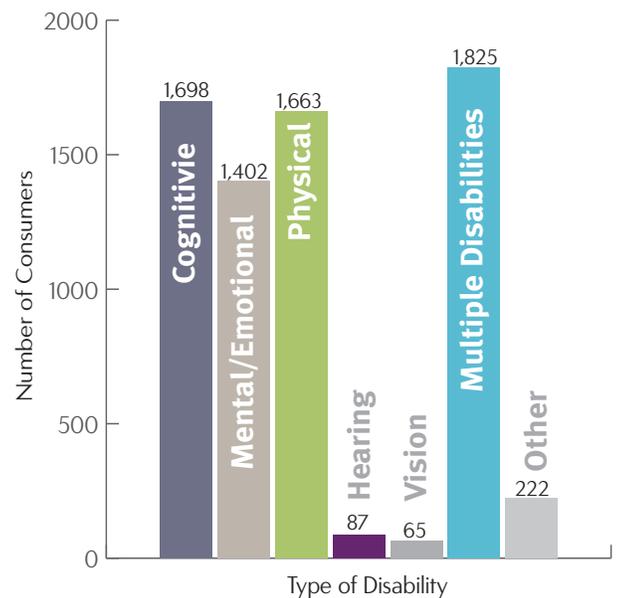
### TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE SERVED BY CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

In FFY 2013, 6,962 individuals were served by Minnesota’s eight CILs, which provided a total of 72,848 received services, including the Independent Living (IL) core services.

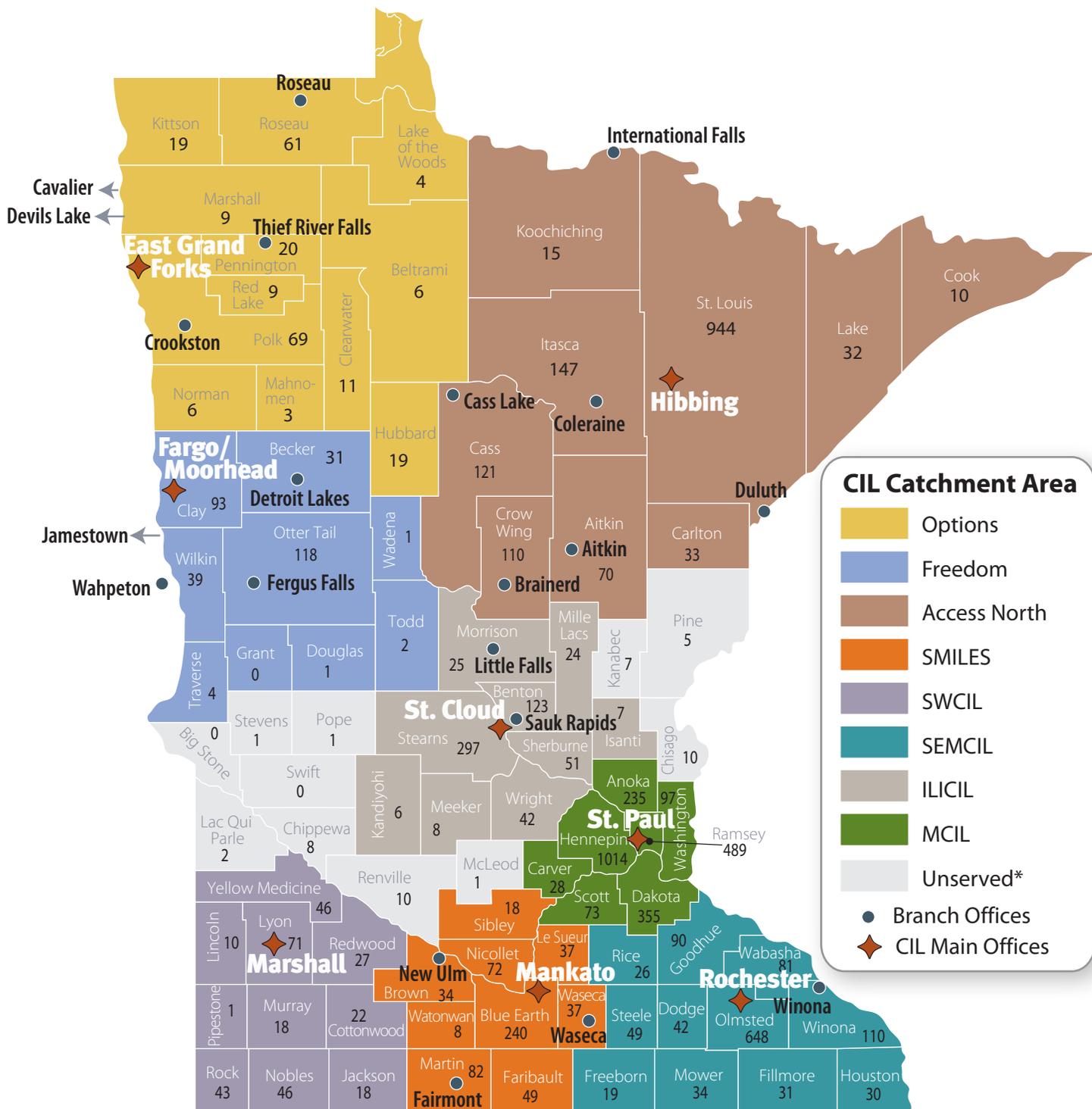
#### AGE BREAKDOWN



#### DISABILITY



PEOPLE SERVED IN EACH COUNTY OF MINNESOTA



\*These counties are currently not part of a CIL catchment area, however, these counties may periodically be served.

## METROPOLITAN CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (MCIL)

## MELVIN BARBER: IL/VR COLLABORATION CONSUMER OF THE YEAR

By Barbara Schifano

What can one say about Melvin that could possibly do him justice? He is a man with a brilliant smile and an equally contagious laugh that magnifies his personality. A charmer, but also a humble man, he has allowed me into his world – and what has been developed is akin to a very nice friendship.

Melvin was referred to me for assistance with child support in 2007, a few short months after the IL/VR project started. What remains is a strong commitment to personal growth and self-sufficiency. By pure self-advocacy he has succeeded in many ways. Some of the ways in which I have guided Melvin have ranged from personal growth to housing to education and beyond. His hard work and dedication has led him to his ultimate goal of employment; he now enjoys four years at his current position.

Melvin was most recently honored at the Loft Literary Center in conjunction with the Minnesota Literacy Council for his excellence in obtaining his GED. I was privileged to be on hand to witness Melvin making his first public speech, which was met with resounding applause as



*Barbara Schifano and Melvin Barber*

well as a monetary scholarship to be used to further his education. There was hardly a dry eye in the house, including my own, and I could not have felt prouder of this accomplishment.

Melvin has been working diligently on his education weekly for the last few years which proves how his life continues to flourish through his dedication to self-determination. It was a perfect evening that put into perspective for me just how important advocacy is in a person's life. I am certain I have gained much more from knowing Melvin than anything that I could have ever done for him.

So it is with absolute pleasure that I nominate Melvin Barber for MCIL Consumer of the Year, as I wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to Melvin for offering me the opportunity to work with such a gentle spirit.

*Barbara Schifano is an IL/VR Specialist at the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living in St. Paul.*

## MATTHEW COLLINS — IL/VR COLLABORATION

*Since 2008*, the VRS-IL collaboration has served Minnesotans with the most significant disabilities that require both vocational rehabilitation and independent living services to meet their goals for working and living in the community. In FFY 2013 DEED-VRS dedicated **\$1,027,446** in program income to fund locally designed collaboration grants with each of Minnesota's eight Centers for Independent Living.

*In FFY 2013*, **1,510 VRS consumers** were served through the collaboration, with **9,122 service hours** being provided.

Employment outcomes have improved, and continue to improve, as a result of this collaboration. The employment rate for participants in 2013 was **66.5 percent**. For those VRS consumers who did not receive services under the collaboration, the employment rate was 58.5 percent. Funding for the VRS-IL collaboration has been continued for FFY 2014.

**M**atthew Collins is enrolled in a two-year program at Anoka-Ramsey Community College. When he finishes he'll transfer to the University of Minnesota to complete a four-year degree and eventually pursue an information technology career with a nonprofit organization.

A severe panic disorder — agoraphobia — had kept Matthew from leaving his apartment for several years, and education wasn't his top priority when he ventured out to see a counselor at the Anoka County Vocational Rehabilitation Services office in Blaine. He wanted a technology job. He had plenty of practical, technical experience — mostly from working freelance and online from his apartment — but he had no real credentials. Those require education and training. Plus, he had a load of debt from a previous college loan, recurring health problems, housing and transportation issues, and a lot of practical questions about how to proceed.

Matthew was a prime candidate for receiving services through an innovative partnership between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Minnesota's Centers for Independent Living. The vision of the VR/IL Collaboration is "to build local service capacity in mutual partnership to advance the employment and independent



living of Minnesotans who require both vocational rehabilitation and independent living to achieve their goals for working and living in the community."

Through the collaboration, Matthew Collins received VR services from his counselor, Kaity Jacobs, and from an independent living specialist, Hallie Ramsey, from the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living in St. Paul. Together they put together a successful plan that included career counseling and practical independent living skills training — a collaboration that helped Matthew achieve self-sufficiency and stability, and ultimately to embark on his journey toward an education, a career, and independence.

You can see a short video about Matthew Collins and his experience with the VR/IL Collaboration here: <http://youtu.be/pref3dF1dFw>

## SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (SEMCIL)

**FULL OF NEW-FOUND CONFIDENCE**

By Nasro Ibrahim

I wanted to work on getting my driver's license. I was in high school and had no job and didn't drive. My teacher referred me to SEMCIL. I worked with SEMCIL transition staff to prepare for the permit test and get the documents I needed to take the test. Since I was born in Somalia, the documents were different and I needed help explaining to my parents what I needed. I passed my permit test and then obtained my license.

I wanted to get a job. I worked with SEMCIL to get a part-time job at McDonalds. I then wanted to look into getting my Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certificate. I hoped to work in a nursing home or group home setting. SEMCIL helped me get connected to Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) in 2012. I then worked with VRS in order to go to school, and obtain my CNA certification.

SEMCIL helped me find different home care agencies and nursing homes to work for, and also helped me complete applications. I wanted to earn enough money to support myself and live in my own apartment. SEMCIL assisted with my employment search and I got another part-time job.

Now that I had enough income to support myself, I needed assistance in finding an apartment. I was



*Nasro Ibrahim*

living at home with my parents, and siblings, and I wanted to venture out on my own, and support myself. In November 2012 I moved into my first apartment.

I am still working with SEMCIL to increase my ability to independently complete forms and budget my money so I can purchase and insure a car. I am also considering pursuing a college degree in law enforcement or a social services field.

In barely two short years I now am full of new-found confidence. I have obtained a driver's license, secured two jobs, obtained a CNA

certificate, and found affordable housing. I believe that by working with SEMCIL staff I will be able to attain any goal I set for myself.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

MNSILC has established three strategic goals for Minnesota's independent living system. The goals guide the work of the council and serve as a framework by which the successes and accomplishments of the system can be measured and evaluated. The three goals are:

1. All Minnesotans with disabilities receive needed services from the current independent living system.
2. Minnesota's independent living program operates effectively and efficiently.
3. The Minnesota independent living program advances the network of independent living services, advises on independent living issues, including policy development and stable and sufficient resources to serve the needs of Minnesotans with disabilities.

## 2013 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

### COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

- Co-hosted a public forum on the Olmstead Plan with the State Rehabilitation Council-General, the State Rehabilitation Council-Blind and the Minnesota State Council on Disability. The forum was the roll-out for the draft of Olmstead Plan designed by the governor's subcabinet. It was held in St. Paul and more than 150 people attended the full-day session, gathering information about the plan and providing feedback to the subcabinet.
- Co-hosted a forum in Rochester with the State Rehabilitation Council-General on employment for people with disabilities, particularly for youth coming out of school. More than 70 people attended this event.
- The Home Accessibility Needs Assessment Task Force, a collaborative task force involving people from the CILs and MSCOD, finalized the Home Accessibility Report and facilitated the printing and posting on MNSILC's website. Distribution has begun.
- State Plan for Independent Living development included CIL directors and DSU representation as well as extensive feedback from the community.

### SITE VISIT TO ACCESS NORTH IN HIBBING

Each year MNSILC holds at least one meeting at one of Minnesota's eight Centers for Independent Living. The site visit usually consists of a two-day meeting: one devoted to learning from the center and one for conducting the council's business meeting. The 2013 meeting occurred at Access North in Hibbing.

This visit afforded a number of opportunities. Staff reviewed service provision in their core areas as well as PCA choice, the Ramp Project and transition services.

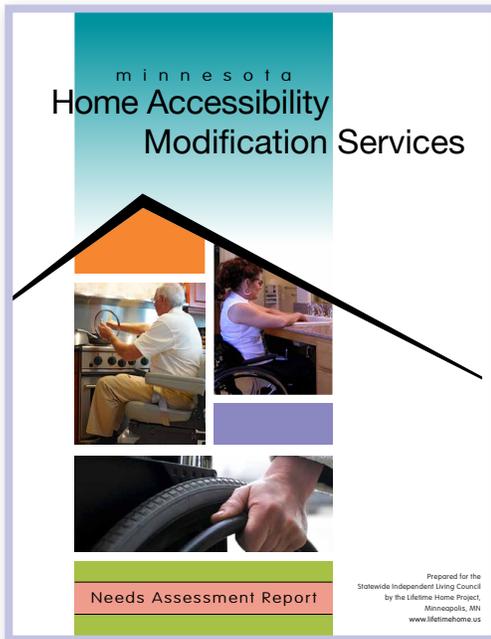
Access North highlighted assistive technology services as an area they do very well. The council learned about the goal for this service and had an opportunity to view

various assistive technology devices from low-tech to high-tech. Members had an opportunity to try many devices. There was also a discussion about how current policies can get in the way of efficient, effective, person-centered service provision.

Members shared a draft of the 2014-2016 SPIL with northeastern Minnesota community members. This generated good questions and discussion regarding independent living needs and services in the northeast region of Minnesota. Access North serves approximately 25 percent of the geographic area of the state and is very rural.

## HOME ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE (HANA)

In 2009 MNSILC was awarded federal stimulus funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The council opted to use these funds to do a statewide Home Accessibility Services Project. The goals were to: 1) assess the scope of assistance that is currently delivered, 2) identify major policy and service delivery gaps in the system, and 3) report results and recommend actions to strengthen delivery capacity.



*One of the outcomes of the Home Accessibility Task Force is a complete needs assessment guide, pictured here.*

The report is organized into three sections. The first provides a broad overview on the character of and demand for home accessibility modification services in Minnesota. The second includes data on services delivered, budgets involved, and clients assisted by IL services and the Centers for Independent Living. The third contains a profile of options potentially available for funding home accessibility modification work in Minnesota.

The report highlights current residential environments and the impact on accessibility inside and outside the home. The impending “Gray Tsunami” (the aging of baby boomers) will cause great challenges for Minnesota. We can anticipate that the strong preference of baby boomers to remain in their homes as they age will increase the demand for services from the centers. Fundamental challenges for all populations include the need for

individualized evaluation of needs, the lack of systematic adoption of construction standards for single-family and other owner-occupied housing design and professional certification for home accessibility construction and installation.

Finalizing the report continued into this fiscal year with time spent making the report fully accessible. Additionally, some of the data was updated. The Executive Summary was published in June and the full report in July. Both documents were posted on the MNSILC website in August. Limited distribution has begun with a full plan for distribution being developed.

When the new SPIL was developed, the Home Accessibility Task Force of MNSILC was moved to a full committee. This will allow the committee to move into new areas of actions in 2014-16.

## OLMSTEAD PLAN

In 2011 a class action suit resulted in Governor Mark Dayton issuing an executive order establishing an Olmstead subcabinet to develop a comprehensive plan supporting freedom of choice and opportunity for people with disabilities. The plan is a framework to ensure that people with disabilities have the supports and services they need to live in the most integrated settings possible.



*Roberta Opheim provided an overview and history of the Minnesota Olmstead Plan.*

The Minnesota Statewide Independent Living Council has followed the process of developing an Olmstead Plan and took two actions. The first was to co-sponsor a forum in June with the two State Rehabilitation Councils and the Minnesota State Council on Disability. Roberta Opheim and Maureen Marrin, from the Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, gave an overview summary of purpose for the Olmstead Plan. Members of the subcabinet described their activities

to develop the plan. Community members then had an opportunity to ask additional questions and provide feedback. The forum also included round-table discussions around specific issues of the plan such as employment, education, and housing. These topical areas are all related to the work of MNSILC, the State Rehabilitation Councils, and the Minnesota State Council on Disability.



*Maureen Marrin helped provide historical context at the Olmstead public forum.*

MNSILC also composed a letter to the subcabinet providing additional feedback on the draft plan. The letter provided broad overview comments as well as specific examples to assist the subcabinet in their work. Key to the comments was the need to take advantage of the well-established expertise of the Centers for Independent Living in the provision of independent living services and supports for people with disabilities.

The council continues to receive and give input regarding the Olmstead Plan. The new SPIL establishes a committee for the sole purpose of reviewing progress towards successful independent living for people with disabilities through implementation of the Olmstead Plan.



*More than 150 people attended the Olmstead forum in June – and an additional 83 followed the discussion via live streaming on the internet.*

## NEW STATE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

MNSILC dedicated a significant amount of time to reviewing the success of goals, objectives and activities from the 2011-2013 State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL), as well as information from various forums and visits with community members and CILs. This information was used to identify and develop goals, objectives and activities for the 2014-2016 SPIL. This effort was done collaboratively with members of the Designated State Units (Vocational Rehabilitation/ Department of Employment and Economic Development and State Services for the Blind) and the Centers for Independent Living (CILs), beginning with a two-day facilitated meeting in November. Every effort was made to include feedback from a variety of formats throughout the process. A public hearing was held in St. Paul in early June. In addition, the public hearing was available through live feed at a number of designated sites across Minnesota. Final approval for the plan was given by MNSILC during their June meeting. The plan was submitted in July and received final approval from the Rehabilitation Services Administration in September.

Three new goals were identified for the 2014-16 State Plan for Independent Living. The full plan is available on the MNSILC website at [www.mnsilc.org](http://www.mnsilc.org)

**GOAL A:** The Independent Living (IL) program is informed of, and advises on, the needs of people with disabilities in MN.

**GOAL B:** Minnesotans have access to IL services statewide.

**GOAL C:** The IL program operates effectively and efficiently.



## 2013 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

### CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Metropolitan Center for Independent Living (MCIL)

Southeastern Minnesota Center for Independent Living (SEMCIL)

Independent Lifestyles Inc. Center for Independent Living (ILICIL)

Access North: Center for Independent Living of Northeastern Minnesota (CILNM)

Options Resource Center for Independent Living (OPTIONS)

Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living (FREEDOM)

Southwestern Center for Independent Living (SWCIL)

Southern Minnesota Independent Living Enterprises and Services (SMILES)

### AGENCIES AND COUNCILS

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)

Minnesota State Council on Disability (MSCOD)

State Services for the Blind (SSB)

State Rehabilitation Council-General (SRC-G)

State Rehabilitation Council-Blind (SRC-B)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING, GO TO [WWW.MACIL.ORG](http://WWW.MACIL.ORG)

This report can be made available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities upon request.

Contact; Brad.Westerlund@state.mn.us ■ 651.259.7351 ■ 1.800.328.9095  
TTY 651-296-3900; Fax 651-297-5159

