

**MetroWest
Center For
Independent Living**

**People with Disabilities
Living in the Community**



Happy Holidays to all. Thank you to everyone who joined us for our annual Open House. We had a great crowd!

2017 promises to be a challenge. With the state implementing 9C cuts in spite of great employment rates and a good economy, it will be difficult to count on funding. And whether you love or hate Donald Trump, everyone agrees that he is unpredictable. It is going to be tough to provide and advocate for services in an uncertain environment. Keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities to educate the government, legislators and the public, and we will all do our best to preserve our civil rights, and keep our safety nets in place.

Thank you to everyone who helped make 2016 a good year for our consumers - those who escaped from institutions, and those who were able to maintain their own homes in the community. *And we are all relieved to start the new year without the worst of the proposed PCA Overtime restrictions.*

Thank you,

Paul Spooner,
Executive Director

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Holiday Open House

We had an excellent time at this year's Holiday Open House with the MA Statewide Council for Independent Living. We were very happy to see more consumers attend, as well as Tom Sannicandro's replacement: Jack Lewis, Puja Mehta from Senator Spilka's office and Ed Carr from the MWRTA.



Newly elected Representative Jack Lewis and David



Jessica and Danya



Pat and friends



Puja Mehta of Sen. Spilka staff and Tyler Terrazi from MWRTA



Great crowd!

DCR's Universal Access Program Winter 2017 Newsletter

The MA Department of Conservation and Recreation has published their Winter 2017 Newsletter on the Universal Access Program. DCR has outdone itself with this year's offerings across the state. You can even find accessible golf - indoors this winter and outdoors in the spring!

Download the [pdf 2017 Winter Newsletter](#), or visit the [DCR Universal Access webpage](#) for more information.

2016 People of the Year: The Resisters

>From [New Mobility](#):

New Mobility Magazine has named several **Resisters of the Year** in their latest edition. The resisters' common cause is against the societal attitude

"Better Dead than Disabled". From proposed assisted suicide laws in multiple states, to the recent movie *Me Before You*, as well as real life situations, activists have been protesting the resulting and future deaths from this attitude. Local leading activist with [Not Dead Yet](#) and [Second Thoughts](#), John Kelly, is mentioned!

The real life stories in the article are chilling, and describe children with disabilities being led to their deaths.

Nationally, there will be a briefing in Washington on January 12: "Physician Assisted Suicide: Dangers for U.S. Health Care." The National Council on Independent Living is asking that everyone contact their Congressperson and Senators in Washington, and encourage them to attend. You can read the details in the [Advocacy Monitor](#) - scroll down to the article.

Locally, the Massachusetts Medical Society has recently decided to fund a survey of its members asking attitudes toward "medical aid in dying".

Read the details in the [Boston Globe](#). Until now, doctors associations have been an important ally in the fight against assisted suicide, so this new survey is not good news.

2017 ATHack

The 2017 ATHack event has been announced.

MIT students are looking for ten to fifteen clients who have a problem in mind. This problem could be anything from something you are unable to do, to an activity you would like to make easier, or even a passion that you are unable to pursue. Teams of students, comprised of mechanical engineers, electrical engineers, and computer scientists, will be matched to clients. Over the course of the hackathon, each team will try to develop a solution that addresses the need of its client.

On the evening of Monday, February 13th, over dinner, clients will introduce themselves and describe a problem that they wish to solve. Students will form teams, and each team will begin to brainstorm ideas with their client.

On Saturday, March 4th, students will create their prototype assistive technology solutions. In the evening, clients will return for dinner and to try out the students' creations!

Not all problems will be solved, but regardless, the event will raise awareness at MIT and inspire more students to develop assistive technologies in the future.

For more information, and/or to apply, visit the ATHack website at assistivetech.mit.edu/athack.

Behind the Scenes at the 2016 Paralympics

New Mobility Magazine published a great article about the 2016 Paralympics. The author is on the U.S. Wheelchair Rugby team. The author came home with a silver medal and great memories! Read the whole article in the [New Mobility Magazine](#).

How Is The World Treating People With Disabilities?

From National Public Radio:

"In the ten years since the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by 168 countries, there has been both progress and stubborn obstacles." This report gives examples of progress and barriers to equal access to Health, Education, Employment and venues around the world.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/12/18/504964701/how->

[is-the-world-treating-people-with-disabilities](#)

From UCLA WORLD Policy Analysis Center: Even the U.S. does not guarantee disability rights in our constitution. The Policy Center analyzed the effects of the CRPD.

... "With more than 1 billion people worldwide - 15 percent of the global population - living with some form of disability, the convention has become one of the most rapidly ratified human rights treaties in history. More than 168 countries are now represented."

<http://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/ucla-world-policy-analysis-center-assesses-countries-efforts>

Google Maps adds Wheelchair Accessibility feature

An article from [The Verge](#) provides information about this new important feature in Google Maps.

I was unable to find this on my phone ... but it's good to know it's planned! Let us know if/when *you* can see this new feature - just because I can't find it, does not mean it is not there. I found the "About" section on my phone (android), but no "Amenities"...

Best Practices for making Congress Listen

As a non-profit organization, we are not allowed to advocate politically, and so we are not recommending that our readers use this attached Indivisible guide for its stated purpose of resisting the Trump Agenda. We have concerns with many of the predicted Trump agenda items, and ongoing, we will be stating our specific concerns as they become more real. Meanwhile, this document has some proven (used by the Tea Party!) techniques for mobilizing on issues - which is why we suggest that our readers study it. The document will explain why the main target of your efforts should be MoC - Members of Congress. Your congressional representatives (Senate and House) ARE interested in what you, the voter, have to say. Our Congresspeople are reelected every two years... an unhappy electorate will not return individuals to Washington.

Download the pdf file: [Indivisible](#)

Link to: [Indivisible Website](#) (a Spanish version is available on the website)

Join REV UP - Make the disability vote count!

For more information, visit www.revupma.org.





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