Knowing.

Opens doors...changes lives.

DISABILITY RIGHTS WISCONSIN 2008 REPORT TO COMMUNITY
Dedicated to the memory and the advocacy of Rebecca C. Young
1934–2008

A four-term member of the Disability Rights Wisconsin Board of Directors, Becky Young brought credentials as a dedicated legislator and champion of making the system work for the most vulnerable. Becky took her governing role seriously, in the State Assembly and in the boardroom. Executive Director Lynn Breedlove recalls being overjoyed when Becky called, after retiring from the legislature, to say she was interested in joining the Disability Rights board. “She was a friend of the agency for decades and truly believed in our mission. Her leadership on advocacy for children, people with mental illness and prison reform was diligent and selfless. Becky beat the drum on those issues, inspiring the determination of everyone around her.”
Opening doors…changing lives

FAIR TO SAY, WHAT WE DO AT DISABILITY RIGHTS WISCONSIN NEVER GETS ROUTINE. Our mandated role as the protection and advocacy agency for people with disabilities in Wisconsin keeps us incredibly challenged and inspired.

We act with and for thousands of consumers. We work alongside equally committed disability and other rights activists. And Disability Rights Wisconsin sustains a visible presence with policymakers at every level.

Looking at the stories we tell in this Report to Community, it is interesting to see how specks on the horizon eight or ten years ago have evolved into substantial issues that fit with the Disability Rights focus on meeting a challenge and creating opportunity.

A good example is the Disability Benefit Specialist Program. It went from being one lawyer in one office to a major team working across the agency. With this effort, we transitioned from having no real profile in public benefits to a national “center of excellence” in this advocacy area, making sure benefit counselors in Wisconsin have the information and training they need to serve people who depend on these benefits.

Access to responsive, humane health care and long term care is another place where Disability Rights Wisconsin is determined to set an advocacy standard. Our SSI Managed Care Advocacy Program helps make managed health care work for people with disabilities. Our Family Care Ombudsman Program plays a similar role for people in managed long term care. As this care model expands, so will Disability Rights advocacy.

Advocates for children also can see what we are doing to make a difference. Disability Rights staff members worked solo and with coalition partners in the past year, commanding serious attention for the harmful use of seclusion and restraint on children with disabilities in schools and treatment settings. Recent moves to legislate against these practices are proof of how individual advocacy can lead to system change.

We also report here on some terrific roll-up-our-sleeves legislative advocacy that secured hearing aid/cochlear implant insurance coverage for children—one more step in our important commitment to deaf people. And the story about growth in our employment advocacy cases shows Disability Rights Wisconsin active on more fronts, protecting a person’s right to be employed, stay employed and do satisfying work that pays.

Considering what it takes to be effective against large-scale injustice and ineffectual policies, Disability Rights Wisconsin is fortunate in its people. Their professionalism, leadership and compassion are a dynamic combination.

What challenges lie ahead? Unwilling to wait and see, our committed board members stay in touch with the realities of people’s lives through the public listening sessions that precede each board meeting held at different locations around the state. Insights gained are invaluable to us all.

Disability Rights Wisconsin is where we should be—opening doors and helping change lives for the better.

Lynn Breedlove
Executive Director

Mark VanDierendonck
Board President, 2007-08
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHO APPLY FOR MEDICAL AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS MUST NAVIGATE A MAZE OF DETAIL. Sometimes the endpoint of that maze resembles a brick wall, a serious barrier to getting assistance or subsidies that are important to an individual’s health, independence and access to opportunity.

Disability Rights Wisconsin works in a partnership of professionals committed to helping people overcome those barriers. The organization provides benefits training and legal assistance to Disability Benefit Specialists (DBS) working in 50 Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) around Wisconsin. These front-line advocates supply advocacy and counseling on complex benefits issues to people with disabilities.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) funds the ADRCs and the DBS program, and contracts with Disability Rights to provide attorney services through the Disability Benefit Specialist Program.

Sharing knowledge and information
When the program began in 2000, Disability Rights Molly Bandt was the sole DBS Program attorney serving a handful of DBSs in eight counties. Today she is Managing Attorney for the training and assistance program that includes a dedicated group of six Disability Rights attorneys with expertise in different legal and benefit areas. They currently collaborate with 57 DBSs who work at the county level and one DBS who serves the deaf community statewide.

Besides Bandt, DBS Program attorneys are Tony Baer, Ellen Henningsen, Jason Klimowicz and Eva Shiffrin in Madison; Ellen Escalera in Milwaukee; and Abigail Mayer in Rice Lake.

Bandt says the expanded group gives the program a depth and breadth of knowledge that is invaluable to the DBSs and their clients. Individual DBS Program attorneys develop insights about how a specific benefit program works—or should work. They constantly track the issues affecting recipients and share what they learn with the DBSs and each other. In an environment where the rules change often, Bandt explains it is important to have people who know enough to penetrate the complexities and incorporate both rules and changes into useful DBS training materials about benefit programs available to people with disabilities.
Creating a network of expertise
The DBS Program attorneys connect with the DBSs at three levels: introductory and ongoing training in public and private benefit programs; case supervision and technical assistance; and direct representation for DBS clients when needed.

The program supports a remarkable network of knowledge among DBSs through a variety of training approaches. The attorneys conduct large-group training sessions and regional round-table sessions each year. They also use web casts to keep DBSs in touch with changes. The training sessions evolved over the years into forums where the DBSs meet and compare notes as well as learn. It is a connection they know how to use, Bandt says, often helping one another by sharing ideas and answers.

Training also happens one-on-one as DBS Program attorneys and DBSs work together to resolve benefit questions. Case studies reported separately here demonstrate the positive power of this collaboration.

Acting on information
Bandt says mutual respect and a passion for resolving problems faced by consumers has a lot to do with the strong working relationship the two groups enjoy. She adds: “The DBSs rely on our expertise and legal help to do their job and get results continued next page

CASE STUDIES EXEMPLIFY THE ATTORNEY AND BENEFIT SPECIALIST CONNECTION

Recent cases illustrate how Disability Benefit Specialist Program attorneys collaborate with Disability Benefit Specialists and make a difference for people with disabilities. According to DBS Program attorney Tony Baer: “It’s rewarding to work on cases where you see the direct results of team work and have the chance to improve outcomes for individuals who might otherwise fail to avoid the pitfalls of public benefits.”

Research the facts to secure access to SSI benefits After an individual with developmental disabilities was denied Supplemental Security Income (SSI) because he worked nearly full time at a job obtained through a school vocational program, a DBS and DBS Program attorney joined forces to obtain evidence they placed before an Administrative Law Judge. The attorney’s research showed the successful job placement depended on accommodations and that the individual could not sustain full-time work in a competitive setting. Thanks to clear evidence of the facts and a statement from the employer, the judge moved quickly to grant the benefits without a hearing.

Persuade employer to reverse denial of COBRA subsidy When a client could not return to work after taking approved medical leave because of a disability, she received a termination notice from her employer. She maintained health benefits under COBRA from that time and paid the full premium. After passage of a new law allowing a subsidy for employees who experience involuntary termination because they are absent from work due to illness or disability, the client requested the subsidy. Her former employer refused to grant it. The DBS stepped in and contacted a DBS Program attorney for guidance on the issue. Armed with the IRS definition, the DBS persuaded the employer to reverse its denial.

Documenting mental illness opens the door to benefits An individual who was homeless and living with under-treated schizophrenia could not secure SSI benefits because he did not have good documentation of his mental illness. He contacted a DBS before the case went to a hearing and she worked with a DBS Program attorney to develop the case. They gathered the necessary medical evidence and arranged testimony from a staff person at the shelter where the client resided. The attorney provided representation at the hearing where the facts of the case proved crucial. The client now has access to health insurance and a monthly income to help him afford housing.
for clients. At the same time, having so many local and in-
formed advocates sharing case information helps us spot pat-
terns that suggest a problem we can deal with at the systems
level.”

Disability Rights impact on benefits issues in Wisconsin
and nationally is a powerful byproduct of its role in the DBS
Program. Hearing individual stories about access and fairness
from colleagues in the field gives the DBS Program attorneys
information they can act on to force change on a larger scale
or push for prompt resolution of a widespread problem.

Bandt recalls the time they received reports from indi-
vidual DBSs that amounted to a flood of termination notices
in the state-administered Medicare savings programs
(QMB, SLMB and SLMB+). The action threatened to bar
people, without cause, from receiving help to pay Medicare
Part B premiums. DBS Program attorneys worked with
DHS and the Social Security Administration to identify the
extent of the problem and develop solutions that eliminated
disruption and confusion for consumers.

Another proof is how Eva Shiffrin’s expertise in
Medicare Part D as a DBS Program attorney and experience
helping hundreds of people navigate the federal drug plan
program through Disability Rights Medicare Part D Helpline
makes her a strong voice nationally on this complex benefit
topic. Hearing first-hand how difficult it was for consumers
to learn the true cost of various plans using information on
the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ plan-finder
tool, Shiffrin requested the Center make improvements—
which they did. The changes provide more complete infor-
mation and make it easier for Medicare recipients
nationwide to make informed decisions about Medicare
Part D plan enrollment.

Prepared for growth
The Disability Benefit Specialist Program continues to ex-
and as the state adds more ADRCs and the DBS Program
attorneys stay in touch with issues affecting access to bene-
fits. Disability Rights Wisconsin remains integral to the im-
port of this expansion as the training and assistance
program builds on its strong foundation of individual ad-
voacy and systems change.
neys Lisa Foley and Mitch Hagopian, and Advocacy Specialist Ginger Rogers complete the External Advocates group for Disability Rights.

**Close the service gap**

“Our presence makes a difference,” says Dixon*Seidl. “Working with consumers one-on-one or staying in touch with the MCOs, our goal is to close the gap in information that exists between the services people need and how the system delivers those services.”

The MCO connection is important. Both Dixon*Seidl and Cabraal have past experience working with the health care organizations. That makes it easier to establish positive relationships as outside advocates for people enrolled through SSI Managed Care.

Dixon*Seidl says the MCOs recognize Disability Rights role and often refer people to them with concerns about coverage. When someone questions a denial of treatment notice, for example, an external advocate intervenes to track medical records and document a request to reverse the denial. “It may take some effort to gather the necessary information, but if it’s out there, we find it and make sure people receive the appropriate care.”

**Prevent worse problems**

While the advocacy program helps individuals navigate the system and overcome barriers to service, Cabraal says they use insights gained from these cases and their contact with the MCOs to work for system change. She says resolving issues at the system level becomes more important every year as SSI Managed Care expands. It has more than 28,000 enrollees in 41 counties now with 17 additional counties joining the system in 2009. “There are more clients than we can see so we must make every contact count,” Cabraal notes.

Sometimes that contact reveals a widespread problem. Such was the case when Disability Rights uncovered and corrected a significant error in the service denial notices MCOs issued to enrollees. Many of the notices violated federal regulations by failing to explain an enrollee’s right to challenge the denial. Cabraal recalls meeting with MCO contacts to explain the problem and helping them rewrite the notices. DHS subsequently incorporated the new language into its SSI Managed Care contracts.

“Without our involvement, this situation would have had serious consequences for enrollees who found themselves in life-endangering circumstances,” she says.

Direct access to DHS policymakers clearly strengthens the impact of the external advocacy program. As they handled individual cases in Milwaukee County last year, the advocates from Disability Rights began to monitor how the county administered public benefits. They found delays in processing benefit reviews and other problems that negatively affected managed care enrollees. Along with other legal advocates, Disability Rights raised the issue with DHS. The department listened and recently took over administering benefit programs in the county.

**Spread the word**

Training and outreach are another key element of the External Advocacy Program, keeping consumers and providers informed about managed care benefit issues. The program has

continued next page
Sometimes you just have to keep an idea alive if you want to bring about change. That is the lesson of the grassroots movement behind successful passage of a bill in the Wisconsin legislature in May 2009 mandating that most health insurance policies and plans cover the cost of hearing aids and cochlear implants for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Disability Rights Wisconsin had a major role in securing the victory. Disability Rights Advocacy Specialist Alicia Boehme worked with legislators, a dynamic group of family activists, professionals in the field and other advocates to build awareness and a groundswell of support.

The new law requires coverage for specific devices and treatment throughout childhood by all plans, excluding private self-insured plans. Broader than similar laws in other
states, the Wisconsin act covers both external and implantable instruments, covers children up to age 18 and does not limit coverage to a specific dollar amount.

Boehme’s commitment to the issue was both professional and personal. The parent of a son diagnosed soon after birth with hearing loss, she wore two hats while testifying at a Senate hearing on the bill in 2007. It was there Boehme connected with others eager to work on the issue and push for ratification.

The group mobilized a statewide network of families and professionals primed to advocate for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. They pushed for an Assembly hearing on the bill in 2008. More than 100 supporters turned out to tell their stories and testify to the value of early intervention using hearing aids or cochlear implants.

“Legislators heard from people frustrated and angered by the lack of coverage,” Boehme says. “They also learned from speech-language pathologists and other experts how important the devices are to a child’s development and ability to learn.”

The session ended without action on the bill so supporters used the time to grow the grassroots. They worked on fine-tuning the legislation with key lawmakers, including State Senator Julie Lassa and members of her staff who provided leadership on the final bill. After another day of powerful test-

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**STORIES FROM THE ADVOCACY ACTION/INFORMATION SITE: letkidshear.org**

I have been hard of hearing since I was 4. When I got my first hearing aids, they were better than I dreamed. I didn’t say “what” as much, and in school I didn’t need the teacher to repeat directions. My hearing aids also make me more interesting…I get to teach people that we’re just as smart as anyone without hearing aids. Hearing should be something everyone can choose to have, regardless of how much money you do or don’t have. —12-year-old girl

It has been almost 2 years since Dylan received his first hearing aids. His “ears,” as he calls them, are his way to learning and socialization. He is learning to use his ability to listen in order to improve his speech. We do not know what he will be “when he grows up,” but he has been given the hearing tools he will need to give him confidence to function in a hearing world. —Nurse and grandmother giving testimony, her 5-year-old grandson at her side

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“LOOKING AT HOW THE SYSTEM FAILED ANGIE, ALL THE MANY THINGS THAT WENT WRONG, OUR FOCUS QUICKLY BECAME MORE THAN ONE CASE”

Managing Attorney Kristin Kerschensteiner says what Disability Rights Wisconsin found when it followed up on the May 2006 death of a 7-year-old girl at a day treatment center in Rice Lake was sobering confirmation of serious problems with seclusion and restraint the organization has fought for years. Angellika Arndt died from injuries sustained as the result of a physical restraint.

Authorized by federal mandate to investigate allegations of abuse and/or neglect against children and adults with disabilities, Disability Rights Wisconsin reviewed everything related to the incident. Together with Kerschensteiner, the team included Advocacy Specialist Rick Pelishek in the Northwest Wisconsin Office, and Supervising Attorney Dianne Greenley, Advocacy Specialist Joanne Berman and Advocacy Specialist Phyllis Greenberger in the Madison office.

What they discovered was a black hole of errors: a flawed admissions process, inadequate staff training, critical disregard for the rules, misinformed treatment methods, and lack of oversight by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). Whether or not scrutiny of the case by Disability Rights influenced the state’s review and ultimate decision, within six months of the incident, DHS shut the treatment center down.
Disability Rights captured the case and its implications in *A Tragic Failure to Act: The Death of Angellika Arndt*, released in November 2008. The report chronicles what happened, and describes the state programs and policies that failed to protect Angie. It also outlines progress made by the state since and recommends next steps to decrease or eliminate seclusion and restraint use in programs that serve children with mental health needs.

“Institutions need to have a line they do not cross,” says Kerschensteiner. “That includes knowing all they can about a child’s behavior and diagnosis before something irreversible happens.”

In a parallel push to raise awareness, Greenley and Disability Rights Managing Attorney Jeff Spitzer-Resnick combined advocacy efforts in 2008 on a study of seclusion and restraint use on children in school and treatment settings. The project involved Disability Rights in a powerful collaboration with Wisconsin FACETS, a parent training and information center, and Wisconsin Family Ties, an advocacy and support organization for families of children with emotional or behavioral disabilities.

Critical to the project was a survey of families across the state about their children’s experiences with the use of seclusion and restraint in both settings. Their stories are the backbone of a joint report entitled *Out of Darkness...Into the Light: New Approaches to Reducing the Use of Seclusion and Restraint with Wisconsin Children* published in April 2009.

“Staying the course was not enough,” says Spitzer-Resnick about what motivated the study. “We had to do something different to get the attention of policymakers and the public.” Greenley concurs and notes the momentum it generated helped the group articulate recommendations for proposed legislation to regulate the use of seclusion and restraint in schools. The report also reviews the effectiveness of existing laws that govern its use in treatment programs and facilities.

The focus of all these efforts reflect Disability Rights long-standing commitment to keep Wisconsin children with disabilities safe from traumatizing and risky techniques, says Executive Director Lynn Breedlove.

“The message here is, no more shortcuts in accountability, no more excuses for not acting in the best interests of children. The time is now.”

…”conditions continue to exist in Wisconsin that could precipitate another death like Angie’s. Until the necessary steps are taken and safeguards created, children in Wisconsin’s day treatment facilities are at risk of following Angie down a similar tragic road.”

–*A Tragic Result of a Failure to Act*

“Depending on the setting, Wisconsin’s laws regarding seclusion and restraint of children are nonexistent or out of date.”

–*Out of Darkness...Into the Light*

Both reports available as a free download at disabilityrightswi.org.
the right to work, learn new skills, and earn a fair wage is an essential ingredient of an independent life.

That is why employment advocacy remains a key focus for Disability Rights Wisconsin. The organization continues to help people with disabilities gain access to training and education, find jobs that match their abilities, and take legal action against discrimination. It also pushes for system change and better laws.

Staff members in all three Disability Rights offices are active in employment advocacy, including Managing Attorney Monica Murphy, Supervising Attorney Alan Freed, Advocacy Specialist Cathy Steffke, Supervising Attorney Jodi Hanna, Managing Attorney and Northwest Wisconsin Office Director Genie Hedlund, and Advocacy Specialist Karen Lane. They report that requests for help from employees with disabilities who fear a discriminatory layoff are up in the down economy.

Disability Rights advocacy and legal resources are important in these times, says Murphy. “We are in a position to insist that improvements in training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities continue, because they must.”

A good example is the Return to Work program run by Disability Rights. The program specifically assists beneficiaries of Social Security who want to enter or re-enter the workforce. Freed says it encourages clients to believe in themselves and their abilities. “Seeing one person gain the confidence to achieve what they or others thought was impossible shows the impact our efforts can have.”

Disability Rights advises individuals referred to the program on overcoming barriers to employment and the training they need to advance. When one of those barriers is the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the agency that provides Return to Work clients with job counseling, Freed and Steffke step in.

They help clients advocate for themselves, making sure DVR provides the level of service required by law. They also challenge a pattern of unfair service denials, failure to inform...
clients of their rights and responsibilities, and vocational counselors who discourage people from setting ambitious employment goals.

Two recent cases illustrate the challenge. In one, DVR pulled tuition funding from a student with mental illness who started his college career late after years of struggle to get his bearings. Finally thriving in a graphic design program, he lost financial support when he failed an advanced computer class. Steffke appealed the denial of services in an impartial hearing and argued the student did not receive an assessment to identify what supports he needed to succeed. The hearing officer ordered DVR to restore funding and cover other training costs.

Another case involved DVR refusing to pay for legitimate school-related services and family supports a single mother needed to complete her nursing degree. Freed says at first the woman’s counselor inappropriately questioned her career choice and denied funding. “When counselors impose their own biased judgment, especially against clients with mental illness, they interfere with that person’s right to make informed choices about a fulfilling career.” He succeeded, through formal mediation, in getting the decision reversed and continues to monitor the case.

Disability Rights also investigates and files complaints on behalf of employed individuals who are denied reasonable accommodation or fired from a job because of their disability.

Experience working on employment issues that undermine one person’s rights is the key to making a case against the system, where Murphy says Disability Rights looks for change with a wider positive impact.

Efforts last year included joining forces with People First Wisconsin calling for revision of a state sub-minimum wage law that permits employers to pay people with disabilities pennies-per-hour in certain circumstances. Documenting the miserly pay and inadequate job options, the coalition advocated for fair compensation and meaningful employment for people who want to and can hold a job.

Victory for people with disabilities who want to maximize their employment potential starts with having a presence. Disability Rights Wisconsin has that presence and intends to keep it strong.

Recognition

Coalition work and career commitment earned recognition in 2008 for Disability Rights Wisconsin and the professionals who endeavor to achieve fairness and equality for people with disabilities.

Call for a fair wage The Governor’s Committee for People with Disabilities presented Disability Rights Wisconsin and People First Wisconsin (PFW) with the 2008 Richard Blakely Organizational Achievement Award last December. The award recognizes the organizations’ joint advocacy efforts for wage reform and continued leadership on this issue. Disability Rights Supervising Attorney Jodi Hanna served with colleagues from PFW on a Department of Workforce Development task force charged with researching federal and state wage laws affecting people with disabilities. What they found, she says, was proof that people working in segregated employment settings like sheltered workshops earn less than minimum wage.

“Our task force recommendations called for policy changes that support meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities,” Hanna reports. “But our work will not be complete until everyone has the choice to work in competitive community employment at a reasonable wage.”

Greenley’s advocacy honored The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin honored Diane Greenley of Disability Rights Wisconsin with its Eunice Z. Edgar Lifetime Achievement Award for 2008 at a Bill of Rights Celebration last February. A Supervising Attorney in Disability Rights Madison office, Greenley served on the ACLU of Wisconsin board for 25 years. The achievement award recognizes her long history of fighting for the rights of people with mental illness in Wisconsin and her advocacy in the areas of consumer rights, community support programs, recovery and overall mental health services. Greenley is known at Disability Rights for facing down the stigma that undermines individual access to services, and mentoring new advocates on legal and social work issues.
FINANCIAL AND SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

Statement of Revenue and Expenses for FY08 and FY07

### Revenue

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<tr>
<th>Revenue Source</th>
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<td>Federal grants</td>
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<td>State grants</td>
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<td>Foundations &amp; Corporations</td>
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<td>Legal Fees</td>
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<td>Consulting Fees &amp; Contracts</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td><strong>Revenue Total</strong></td>
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<td>Subcontracts</td>
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<td>Occupancy</td>
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<td>Travel, Meetings, &amp; Conferences</td>
<td>149,763</td>
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<td>Other Operating Costs</td>
<td>385,116</td>
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<td>Depreciation</td>
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<td><strong>Expense Total</strong></td>
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**Net Income (loss)**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td>81,394</td>
<td>48,008</td>
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Statement of Financial Position for FY08 and FY07

### Assets

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<th>Asset Description</th>
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<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>Accounts receivable</td>
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<td>Grants receivable</td>
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<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
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<td>Property and equipment, net</td>
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<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
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### Liabilities and Net Assets

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<td>Leasehold improvement payable</td>
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<td>Accrued vacation</td>
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<td>Grand funds received in advance</td>
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### Long-term liabilities

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<td><strong>Total long-term liabilities</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td>1,928,621</td>
<td>839,040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foundation/Corporation Partners

- Custer Financial Services/Lincoln Financial Advisors
- Equal Justice Fund
- Faye McBeath Foundation
- Greater Milwaukee Foundation
- Impact Fund
- Kammer and Studinski
- Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation
- Ziemann Foundation, Inc.

Total Individuals Served Statewide in 2008

One-to-One Advocacy: 3779 (see map above)
Benefits Information and Referrals: 1043
Training/Consultation: 5697

Financial and service highlights

Revenue FY08

- Federal grants 55%
- State grants 18%
- Foundations & Corporations 12%
- Legal Fees 2%
- Consulting Fees & Contracts 13%
- Other 0.19%

Expenses FY08

- Personnel 75%
- Other Operating Costs 11%
- Occupancy 6%
- Subcontracts 3%
- Travel, Meetings, & Conferences 4%
- Depreciation 1%

Total individuals served statewide in 2008

One-to-One Advocacy: 3779 (see map above)
Benefits Information and Referrals: 1043
Training/Consultation: 5697
BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS 2008-2009

Board 2008

Ben Barrett
Trego
Donald Fell
New Berlin
Mary Jane Grande
Ashland
Jeanette Herrera
Milwaukee
Jerome Holzbauer
Milwaukee
Catherine Kunze
West Allis
Mary Lynn Larson
Appleton
James Powell
Sun Prairie
Jeffrey Timm
Franksville
Mark VanDierendonck
Waukesha
Marilyn Walczak
Milwaukee
Rebecca Young
Madison

Elected 2009

Sandra Ahrens
Eau Claire
Tony DePerry
Solon Springs
Rose Helms
Evansville
Alma Mann
Janesville
Leslie Riggs
Appleton
Frank Sterzen
Sheboygan Falls
Michelle Sturz
Evansville

Staff 2008

Madison
Betsy Abramson
Family Care Program Manager
Linda Apple
Office Manager

Molly Bandt
Managing Attorney
Kristine Beck
Administrative Specialist
Joanne Berman
Advocacy Specialist
Alicia Boehme
Advocacy Specialist
Lynn Breedlove
Executive Director
Jo Cauley
Advocacy Specialist
Phyllis Greenberger
Advocacy Specialist
Dianne Greenley
Supervising Attorney
Mitch Hagopian
Supervising Attorney
Jodi Hanna
Supervising Attorney
Ellen Henningsen
Staff Attorney
Kim Hogan
Intake Specialist
Lisa Jameson
Receptionist/Clerical Assistant
Amy Judy
Violence Against Women with Disabilities Project Coordinator
Joan Karan
Assistant Director
Pat Kelly
Advocacy Specialist
Kristin Kerschensteiner
Managing Attorney
Jason Klimowicz
Staff Attorney
Chris L’Heureux
Advocacy Specialist
Carol Nelson
Financial Manager
Maxine Patchin
Accounting Assistant
Mike Reese
Accounting Assistant
Eva Shiffrin
Staff Attorney
Jeff Spitzer-Resnick
Managing Attorney
Mark Sweet
Trainee & Program Consultant

Milwaukee
Barbara Beckert
Milwaukee Office Director
Shirin Cabraal
Managing Attorney
Elise Cassinetti
Office Coordinator
Joy Combs
Receptionist
Julie Dixon-Seidl
SSI Managed Care Project Coordinator
Sue Endress
Advocacy Specialist
Ellen Escalera
Staff Attorney
Elizabeth Ford
Advocacy Specialist
Alan Freed
Staff Attorney
Peter Hoeffel
Advocacy Specialist
Krystal Johnson
HUD Project Coordinator
Mike Johnstone
Intake Specialist
Hope Lloyd
Advocacy Specialist
Monica Murphy
Managing Attorney
Tracy Reed
Advocacy Specialist
Ginger Rogers
Advocacy Specialist
Cathy Steffke
Advocacy Specialist

Rice Lake
Eugenia Hedlund
NW Wisconsin Office Director

April Kieler
Administrative Specialist
Karen Lane
Advocacy Specialist
Rick Pelishek
Advocacy Specialist

Students/Volunteers 2008

Katherine Bayless
Neelam Dhadankar
Swathi Dhoma
Jana Ellingson
James Judy
Laurie Maltawou
Sarah Mears
Deborah Meiners
Elizabeth Mensing
Erin Parks
Matthew Resko
Charles Squires

Staff Added 2009

Madison
Torey Allen
Receptionist/Clerical Assistant
Anthony Baer
Staff Attorney
Teresa Clark
Family Care Ombudsman
Jill Gonzalez
Advocacy Specialist
Sarah Schwenker
Staff Attorney

Milwaukee
Joan Basch
Receptionist/Clerical Assistant
Sally Flaschberger
Advocacy Specialist
Lisa Foley
Supervising Attorney
Jamie Miller
Family Care Ombudsman
Trishla Shah
Intake Specialist

Rice Lake
Abigail Mayer
Staff Attorney

Writing: Mary Maher
Design: Zucker Design
TTY: 888-758-6049 (for all three offices)
Disability Drug Benefit Helpline: 800-926-4862 statewide

* for persons with disabilities and their family members

disabilityrightswi.org
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