



# Independent Life

The Center for Independent Living In Central Florida, Inc. November 2009

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## Disability Mentoring Day Opens Career Possibilities

Sparking the imagination with future possibilities, students with disabilities fanned out across the area to experience a day of career discovery and exploration for the 2009 Central Florida Disability Mentoring Day (DMD). More than 200 students from a variety of schools in the Orange County Public School system visited a diverse array of businesses to job shadow and learn more about industry, careers and everything involved with the world of work.

People with disabilities continue to experience much higher rates of unemployment than people without disabilities, and the recession has made the problem worse. Events like DMD helps get kids and young adults interested in a career path early. That helps make the transition from school to work much smoother and more successful for people with disabilities and their families.

CIL's Director of Advocacy and Legislative Affairs, Rogue Gallart says DMD helps both kids and employers. "Central Florida Disability Mentoring Day is not only a chance for students to learn about the workplace but businesses also

learn how much people with disabilities have to offer as reliable, resourceful workers", Mr. Gallart said.

At Walgreens Distribution Center students toured the facility and saw how it operates. At SunTrust they sat in on a

couple of presentations about careers in the financial services industry. Students sat in on an actual job interview at the Hyatt Regency Orlando Airport. At Publix students got to blow up balloons, make cupcakes and scan products on shelves. Disney Entrepreneur Center Executive Director Jerry Ross conducted a tour and had students look on as

business plans were created. Lunch was provided for students at all work sites. DMD was also conducted in Polk County by CIL's Lakeland office.

The 2009 Central Florida Disability Mentoring Day was made possible by a coalition of public and private organizations that included the Center for Independent Living in Central Florida, the Able Trust, Orange County Public Schools, the Disney Entrepreneur Center, the Central Florida Disability Chamber, the Business Advisory Council of Central Florida, Lock-



Photo subjects, left to right — April Schauer, CIL; Wayne Olson, VR; Sally Ash, Able Trust; Margaret Gundersen, SunTrust; Charolette Bales, SunTrust; Maria Georgo, Beacon College; Rogue Gallart, CIL; Nichole Arguello, All Medical Personnel; Jerry Ross, Disney Entrepreneur Center; Kathryn Garcia, Lockheed Martin; Marisol Romany, Orlando Health; Keith Landry, FOX 35 News; Cannon Cameron, Orange County Public Schools.

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Independent Life is published by the Center for Independent Living in Central Florida, Inc.

720 North Denning Drive  
Winter Park, Florida 32789  
407- 623-1070 voice  
407-623-1185 TDD  
407-623-1390 fax  
www.cilorlando.org

**Lakeland Office**  
115 Traders Alley  
Lakeland, Florida 33801  
863-413-2722 voice  
863-413-3010 TDD  
863-413-2725 fax

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# Extending Hours

To serve you better we are extending our service hours beginning December 7, 2009.

## Winter Park Office

### Service Hours



**Monday—9:00am to 4:00 pm**  
**Tuesday—9:00am to 5:00 pm**  
**Wednesday—9:00am to 4:00 pm**  
**Thursday—9:00am to 6:00 pm**  
**Friday—Closed**

### Phone Hours



**Monday—8:30am to 5:30 pm**  
**Tuesday—8:30am to 5:30 pm**  
**Wednesday—8:30am to 5:30 pm**  
**Thursday—8:30am to 6:00 pm**  
**Friday—Closed**

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## Lakeland Office

**Monday—Closed**  
**Tuesday—9:00am to 5:00 pm**  
**Wednesday—9:00am to 4:00 pm**  
**Thursday—9:00am to 6:00 pm**  
**Friday—9:00am to 4:00 pm**

### Service Hours



**Monday—Closed**  
**Tuesday—8:30am to 5:30 pm**  
**Wednesday—8:30am to 5:30 pm**  
**Thursday—8:30am to 6:00 pm**  
**Friday—8:30am to 5:30 pm**

### Phone Hours



If you have any questions please contact Dan Ryan at 407-623-1070 ext. 133 or by email at [dryan@cilorlando.org](mailto:dryan@cilorlando.org)

## Security, Independence and a Better Life

Aging in place means security, independence and a better life for seniors and people with disabilities. On October 15 the Central Florida chapter of the National Aging in Place Council presented its 2nd annual event called A Step Ahead: Central Florida's Vision for Aging in Place. About 140 people attended this half day event at the Home Builders Association of Metro Orlando in Maitland that featured four recognized experts in Aging in Place issues.

One of the hottest topics was covered by Architect Peter C. Sechler. Mr. Sechler talked about the importance of planning ahead to ensure whole community accessibility. He described accessible sidewalks and other traffic calming strategies that include traffic roundabouts and dropped curbs. Mr. Sechler is a Principal with the firm of Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin

Scott Clark of Orlando Health spoke about bridging the gap between hospitals and home health service providers. Jack L. Bowersox is a manager with Life Wellness Communities Development Company. He spoke about the development of not-for-profit senior housing communities. Dr. William Mann of the University of Florida also spoke.

Working in small groups, participants talked about local government involvement with community accessibility planning. Since the ADA governs new public buildings, there was discussion regarding the need for possible regulation of private construction. There was also mention of the Orange County Disability Advisory Board's input into assuring the accessibility of the new Orlando Arena during the design phase.

The local Aging in Place Chapter meets bi-monthly to discuss issues. In addition to the annual event, chapter members speak before a variety of community and civic groups.

Planning Committee members represent a diverse cross section of

Central Florida businesses interested in senior and disability issues including: CIL, Orlando Health, Senior Resource Alliance, Orange County Office on Aging, Winter Park Health Foundation, AARP, Home for Life Design and Consulting and the Home Builders Association of Metro Orlando.

For more information on Aging in Place or other disability issues please contact CIL Outreach Director Doug Davis at 407-623-1070 or by email at [ddavis@cilorlando.org](mailto:ddavis@cilorlando.org).



Left to right, Karen Kassik (from Home Accessibilities) specializing in home design, Chris Gonsalves & Kathleen Miller from Orlando Health's Visiting Nurses Association, Carolyn Sithong from Home for Life Design, Doug Davis, CIL

## Orlando Performers Compete to Raise Money for Ramps

The second annual Orlando's Got Talent special event pitted talented performers against one another in a fun and friendly competition that raised over \$3,500 for the Rampage event to help build wheelchair ramps.

About 350 people were on hand at Cowboys Orlando nightclub to watch singer Janell Wheeler win the grand prize of \$1000, the rock band She Bites receive \$500 for second place and singer Brittany Butcher win \$250 for third place during the September 13 event.

CIL Outreach Director Doug Davis said, "Funding of this kind comes at a very important time for our Rampage event. Since this event is run solely on donations, every penny we receive helps bring independence to people with disabilities."

Judges for the competition included Orlando Sentinel music critic, Jim Abbott, Apopka singer/songwriter Johnny Bulford, country singer April Phillips, singer/songwriter Jeff Coffey, and Pastor Tiger Aguon. Radio personality Dave Collins of Magic 107.7 hosted and introduced performers.



Performers included a variety of singers, a comedian and an out-of-the-ordinary clogging team. Many people came out to see seven-year-old Gina Marie Incendela sing. She sings the National Anthem at events all across Florida and was a featured singer of the National Anthem at the 2009 NBA playoffs in Orlando earlier this year. When Gina was two years old she was diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.

The two hour event also featured a silent auction, 50-50 prize money raffle, poker run and food supplied by A+ BBQ. In an unusual and appreciated show of support, raffle winner John Wubena of Celebration Hotel donated his \$250 winnings back to CIL.

CIL thanks its staff who volunteered and volunteers Deb Hampton, Vikki Frasier and Teresa Carter. Also thanks to emcee Dave Collins from radio station Magic 107.7, Soldier's Angels, Central Florida Homewatch Caregivers, and Flood Church of Lakeland. A special thanks to Cowboys Orlando and its staff for the generous donation of the venue and the staff time devoted to the show.

For more information on the Rampage ramp building event or Orlando's Got Talent please contact Doug Davis at 407-623-1070 or [ddavis@cilorlando.org](mailto:ddavis@cilorlando.org).

# Rampage! 2010

Dollar Goal: \$25,000



CIL's fifth annual wheelchair ramp building event, Rampage! is scheduled for February 2010. We have raised a little over \$14,000 so far. Rampage! continues to bring dignity and independence to people with disabilities. Often just one or two steps separate many people in Central Florida from daily activities.

CIL staff, donors, and volunteers built 12 ramps last year and we want to build even more this year. But we can only do that with YOUR financial support. Please use the donation form below or use our secure website at: [www.cilorlando.org/donate](http://www.cilorlando.org/donate)

For more information or to volunteer, please contact CIL at 407-623-1070

## I Would Like to Support Rampage 2010

CIL is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering people with disabilities to maximize their independence.

Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.  Mr. and Mrs.  \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of  \$50  \$100  \$250  \$500  \$1000  \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to the Center for Independent Living in Central Florida.

Please charge my  VISA  MasterCard

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your gift to:

Center for Independent Living  
720 N. Denning Drive  
Winter Park, Florida 32789

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF CIL**

# Lakeland Happenings

*The Center for Independent Living's Lakeland office serves people with disabilities in Polk, Hardee, Highlands, and DeSoto counties in Central and South Central Florida.*

## Polk County Disability Mentoring Day

CIL's Lakeland office helped organize a successful Polk County Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) on October 21 for more than 100 students and young adults. Students and young adults with disabilities, also known as mentees, visited a variety of Polk County businesses where they were mentored by business leaders and employees. Mentees job shadowed, learned about industries, careers and other employment options.

CIL Lakeland Site Manager John Hurt said, "It's really encouraging to see this number of young people who are interested in learning more about different jobs. It shows the level of commitment these kids have to becoming successful in the future."

Businesses that were involved and provided mentors for the day include: Publix Headquarters and Publix stores throughout Polk County, Polk County School System, Red Lobster, Lakeland Regional Hospital, Big Lots in Winter Haven and Lake Wales, Orchid Springs Animal Hospital, the SPCA, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Lowes Home Improvement, Bright House Networks, and Sam's Club.



The mentees came from Goodwill Industries, Polk School System, Alliance for Independence, and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.

The day started at the University of South Florida's Lakeland campus with guest speakers including Sally Ash from Able Trust, Richard Pellegrini from the Business Leadership Network, and Bill Palmer from VR.

CIL wants to thank Able Trust for providing transportation and other support for DMD activities. Thanks also to DMD co-chair Jennifer Monje and all the other DMD committee members. Thanks to Publix who donated food for continental breakfast.

## Wheelchair Ramp Building Rolls On!

Thanks to Talbot House Ministries for supplying both the materials and the labor for two ramps. CIL consumers Nancy Whitehead and Henry Kirkland received ramps in August and October.

## Expansion of Employment Services

CIL's partner agency, the Agriculture and Labor Program (ALPI), has secured funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to provide additional employment services. The one year project starts November 2009.

## Disability and the Law Workshop

For people with disabilities self advocacy starts with knowing about the law and legal issues. About 25 people attended the Disability and the Law Workshop on Saturday August 8, 2009 at the First Unitarian Church of Orlando. The workshop was organized for people with disabilities, caregivers, healthcare professionals and others to learn about the law and how it relates to disability.

Scheduled speakers included individuals from Representative Alan Grayson's office, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Vocational Rehabilitation, the Orange County Disability Advisory Board, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Attorney Bradley Conway and others.

Disability and legal-related issues like advocacy, Social Security, Medicaid Waiver, the proposed health care bill and others were discussed. Attendees were also interested in services provided by the APD and resources available through Representative Grayson's office.

CIL Advocate Christinne Rudd was there to provide information on the agency's services including advocacy, accessibility modifications, employment, housing and others. The workshop was free to registered participants.

## HUD Grants Housing Counseling Funding

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has granted funding to CIL to increase its housing counseling services as a HUD approved Local Housing Counseling Agency.

CIL will continue to perform a range of housing counseling services that help people become or remain homeowners or find rental housing, and assist homeless persons in finding the transitional housing they need to move toward a permanent place to live. Grant recipients also help homebuyers and homeowners realistically evaluate their readiness for a home purchase, understand their financing and down payment options, and navigate what can be an extremely confusing and difficult process.

In addition, CIL's Housing Counseling Services help combat predatory lending by helping un-wary borrowers review their loan documentation, and avoid unreasonably high interest rates, inflated appraisals, unaffordable repayment terms, and other conditions that can result in a loss of equity, increased debt, default, and even foreclosure. Likewise, foreclosure prevention counseling helps homeowners facing delinquency or default employ strategies, including expense reduction, negotiation with lenders and loan servicers, and loss mitigation, to avoid foreclosure. With foreclosures at critical levels, these services are more important than ever.

The preliminary notice of award shows HUD funding to CIL totaling \$42,724. The agency is subject to biennial performance reviews to maintain their HUD-approved status.

For more information on Housing Counseling call CIL at 407-623-1070.

**Center for Independent Living  
in Central Florida, Inc.**

720 North Denning Drive

Winter Park, Florida 32789

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## Disability Mentoring Day

*(Continued from page 1)*

heed Martin, Orlando Health, Hyatt Regency Orlando, Beacon College, All Medical Personnel, Universal Orlando Resort, The Home Depot, the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and others. Thanks go out to all participants but extra thanks for support materials and other resources goes to The Able Trust, Orange County Public Schools, Beacon College, the Disney Entrepreneur Center and to Publix Super Markets.

The Central Florida DMD kicked off at the Disney Entrepreneur Center on October 7 when about 120 people gathered to hear a number of inspirational speakers talk about the importance of education, what makes a good employee, available career paths and more. About 70 students with disabilities were there and participated in an opportunity fair.



The Central Florida DMD is a locally organized part of a national effort to promote career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through hands-on career exploration, on-site job shadowing and ongoing mentoring leading to internship and employment opportunities. DMD is recognized on the third Wednesday of every October in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

For more information on employment opportunities for people with disabilities or the 2009 Central Florida Disability Mentoring Day call Rogue Gallart at 407-623-1070 or email [rgallart@cilorlando.org](mailto:rgallart@cilorlando.org).