

Greater Bangor Disability Asset Network

Our Mission:

To act as a catalyst to promote financial literacy for individuals with disabilities so they can achieve greater financial independence, security, and enjoy an enhanced quality of life through skillful asset -- building.

*Sponsored by
the Disability
Employment
Initiative. Funding
provided by
USDOL and the
Office of Disability
Employment Policy*

What's Happening In Our Network?

Aroostook County hosts Maine's second Asset Summit

The Disability Employment Initiative team in Presque Isle hosted a Disability Asset Summit, which brought together about 35 stakeholders in the area with the goal of creating greater awareness of the options for economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities. Another goal of the summit was to make financial institutions and businesses aware of the large market potential that people with disabilities represent (estimated over 120,000 people in Maine). A workgroup is being formed to create an action plan of next steps. This summit was modeled after the Asset Summit held in Bangor in June 2011.

Disability Mentoring Day helps participants "Explore the Possibilities"

Twenty one job seekers of all ages gathered at Bangor Housing Authority's Community Center on Wednesday October 19th for "Explore the Possibilities" a program of employment related activities in observance of National Disability Mentoring Day. Sponsored by the American Association of People with Disabilities, DMD is a large-scale national effort to promote career development for students and job seekers with disabilities. The local DMD event featured six local employers who donated their time to meet with small groups of participants to talk about their company's mission, business challenges, hiring practices and company culture. The day was organized by staff from Eastern Maine Development Corporation, Allies, Inc, Maine Department of Labor's Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, and the Disability Employment Initiative grant.

TimeBanking Opportunity Coming to Bangor

NDI (the technical assistance consultants who support the Disability Employment Initiative) and TimeBanks USA are collaborating to

design a multi-site national demonstration project that focuses on bringing TimeBanking to people with disabilities. Bangor is one of three New England demonstration sites they have chosen for possible development of the TimeBanking model. The basic idea in TimeBanking is for individuals to donate their talents and time in exchange for services that they need, thus increasing self-sufficiency and self-determination.

More information coming soon!

Interested in learning about TimeBanking? See these links:

- <http://timebanks.org/>
- <http://www.sunjournal.com/city/story/1064912> a story on Lewiston/Auburn's TimeBank

Penquis Air Sealing Program Offers Benefits to Homeowners

The JTG Foundation is supporting a program through Penquis to help homeowners save energy. Eligible homeowners who are able to make their own improvements can get expert energy advice, free materials, and information specific to their home and identify air leaks with a free blower door test. This program is for income eligible homeowners in Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Knox Counties. For more information and application see <http://www.penquis.org/news.php?id=194> or contact Mike Bush at 973-3545 or mbush@penquis.org

Watch for this December workshop

Starting Your Small Business presented by Small Business Development Center at CEI and SCORE. This free two-hour workshop is offered to startup and existing business owners. Date and location to be announced. Call 207 942 1744 amcalhany@ceimaine.org or Bangor SCORE 207 942 0103 Patricia.rice@scorevolunteer.org for more information.

For Your Information...

Each regular issue of "The Connector" highlights an asset building strategy or program that can be accessed by people with disabilities.

Finding Support For Your Higher Education Goals

By Marty Kelley

Maine Educational Opportunity Center

Many adults are applying to college today. Jobs that once required a high school degree now ask for an associate's degree (two year college degree). The task of applying to college can seem overwhelming; sometimes you just don't know where to start. Maine Educational Opportunity Center (MEOC) was established in 1991 for the sole purpose of connecting adults to higher education. As long as you have a GED or high school diploma, MEOC will help you make the connection.

MEOC is part of the TriO Program, grant-funded through the Department of Education. I have been working for MEOC for the past six years and consider it a privilege to do so. I have had the honor of meeting many wonderful people and helping them connect to college studies as they look for a new career. And college offers so much more than a new career! It is an opportunity to know new people, to read about and study new ideas and programs and to discover potential that has been hidden for years. It is a great opportunity.

MEOC workshops about college and financial aid are held all through the state of Maine and in several sites in Bangor. To schedule yourself into a workshop, call 800-321-7303 and find one that suits your schedule. A familiar workshop site in Bangor is the Tri-County Career Center on Oak Street. Workshops are held every Friday at 9:00 a.m. (except November 4).

At the workshop you will talk about college and fill out applications and get a fee waiver that saves you the cost of the application fee. You will also fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and talk about how financial aid works and what grants you may receive and what scholarships are available.

The workshop runs from two to three

hours and, at the end, you will have applied to college and for financial aid, have all your questions answered and have a person to turn to when a new question comes up. I hope you will consider coming to an MEOC workshops.

Alpha One

2012 Powering Education Scholarship

This annual scholarship was established by Alpha One to assist people with disabilities who wish to pursue post-secondary education. It will provide awards of \$2,000 each to 3 selected candidates for both undergraduate and graduate programs. Completed forms should be submitted by fax or postmarked for mailing no later than April 1, 2012. For more information and the application see: http://www.alpha-one.org/story.php?news_id=4656

Contact Mardi Way at 619-9274 with any questions.

Additional Possible Sources of Training Funds or Support For Higher Education

Vocational Rehabilitation
(Bangor CareerCenter)

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
(Bangor CareerCenter)

Family Development Accounts
(Women, Work and Community, Penquis, and
Washington Hancock Community Agency)

Asset Network Workgroup Update

The Asset Network Workgroup is in the process of designing a resource guide with contact information for a variety of asset building resources, to be used by consumers and support professionals.

You are encouraged to share and distribute this newsletter. You can find the pdf version of past and current issues for printing at Eastern Maine Development Corporation's website www.emdc.org in the Disability Employment Initiative page under the "Workforce" tab as well as on the Maine Career Center's website: www.mainecareercenter.com under "Disability Resources".

Featured resources in upcoming issues of *The Connector*:

December:

Tax Preparation Assistance

January:

Predatory Lending

February:

Maximizing Tax Refunds

To submit announcements about community activities or program changes to future issues of The Connector, please contact Gwen LaPointe at glapointe@emdc.org

Asset Network Workgroup Members

