



Michigan Partners For Freedom

Fall 2010

The Principles of Self-Determination

Freedom, the opportunity to choose where and with whom one lives as well as how one organizes all important aspects of one's life with freely chosen assistance as needed.

Authority, the ability to control some targeted amount of public dollars.

Support, the ability to organize that support in ways that are unique to the individual.

Responsibility, the obligation to use public dollars wisely and to contribute to one's community.

Confirmation, the recognition that individuals with disabilities themselves must be a major part of the redesign of the human service system of long-term care.

From the Center for Self-Determination

A Letter From the MPF Project Coordinator...

Dear Partners,

Since the last edition of the newsletter, Michigan Partners for Freedom has been very active in building demand for Self-Determination. The Local Leaders have been busy conducting outreach activities – explaining to people with disabilities, their families, and service providers how the principles of Self-Determination are present in their lives. In August I attended a conference in Baltimore, Maryland titled, *Reinventing Quality 2010*. This was my first time attending this biannual national conference. Michigan was well represented at this meeting, not only in the conference's content, but as participants and presenters. In fact, four people from Michigan were panelists on one of the conference's plenary sessions including Michigan Partners for Freedom Local Leaders, Ray Schuholz (Wayne County) and David Dewitt Taylor (Oakland County). Ray, David, and their colleagues (Daniel Perry and Annette Downey) shared their stories of how employment can reinvent quality in a person's life. Employment is such a significant measurement of quality of life. After their presentation, these gentlemen received a standing ovation from the more than 750 conference participants. Well done!

In addition to the efforts of informing local and national groups about Self-Determination, the Local Leaders gathered this past summer at the 4th Annual Michigan Partners for Freedom Local Leaders Summit. This year's Summit was convened in partnership with The Arc Michigan at its annual statewide conference in Grand Rapids. The purpose of the Local Leader Summit is to gather together MPF Local Leaders to enhance their skills in building demand for Self-Determination. Over the past several Summits, the Local Leaders have truly developed their public speaking and presentation skills, gained confidence in their role as a Local Leader, and their ability to deliver the message of Self-Determination. These leaders should be recognized for their *determined* commitment to Self-Determination and advocacy. See inside for more details about the Summit's activities.

Best regards,
Angela Martin

Fourth Annual Summit Shows Growth in Leadership



Success! The Local Leader Summit occurred June 18-19 with 26 participants.

The 2010 Annual MPF Summit began Friday night at the beautiful Amway Grand in Grand Rapids with the MPF Local Leaders attending the Arc of Michigan conference b a n q u e t . Entertainment was provided by disability rights advocate Johnny Crescendo who sang **“Tear Down These Walls”** in honor of the Mount Pleasant institution closing. Mr. Crescendo was in town to address a group of self-advocates. Saturday’s agenda included techniques and skills to build demand for Self-Determination in Michigan. Sessions focused on public speaking tips, how to improve outreach, getting to the right contact person and a brainstorming session to identify concerns related to speaking arrangements. The afternoon included facilitated mock presentations by some MPF Local Leaders who were evaluated by others in attendance on their effective public speaking skills.

What Does Finding a Roommate Have to do With Self-Determination?

MPF Local Leaders have promoted the principles of Self-Determination at the *Roommate Mixer for Independent Living Options* in Genesee County. This ongoing fun event included pizza, BINGO (about compatibility) and games. In addition to MPF, the mixer is sponsored by the Genesee County CMH, Michigan Community Services, Residential Advancement, Inc., Goodwill Industries of Mid-Michigan and the Self-Determination Advancement Team. Longtime MPF Local Leader

Eric Thomas says: *“We invite people who use CMH services to find a match; perhaps for when they want to move out of their parents’ home or wherever else they may live. Some are afraid to move out on their own, others need to share costs.”* Eric continues, *“We are on hand to talk with anyone about how we gained the independence and the self-determination we have. Many say ‘wow’—if you can do it, so can I.”*



Jill Hawley presenting about the roommate mixer at the Local Leader Summit.

An International Exchange

In September, Michigan Partners for Freedom (MPF) Steering Committee members met with state and local administrators from Sweden’s public agency that serves individuals with disabilities. MPF shared information on how it has worked together with individuals with disabilities to build statewide demand for Self-Determination. The Swedish officials were particularly interested in the Local Leader training curriculum. As a result, the Swedish administrators have been in contact and requested assistance to possibly replicate a similar approach in Sweden.

Michigan Partners for Freedom Featured on TV



Michigan Partners for Freedom is proud to announce that Kalamazoo's Public Media Network has aired two programs produced by MPF about self-determination. The first DVD segment consists of individuals answering the question: "What does freedom mean to you?" Their answers are enlightening and remind us of how far our state has come. It also draws attention to the areas in which the state needs to improve to help individuals live the lives they want. The second DVD segment highlights and features interviews with individuals throughout the state that have utilized the principles of self-determination to gain more independence and develop ties to their community. Some of the topics covered include housing, employment, and community integration.

Speaking of Freedom

In partnership with the Ottawa **RICC** and The Arc of Ottawa, Michigan Partners for Freedom presented a general training session about Self-Determination. The majority of participants who attended the training session were individuals who receive services from a local provider whose mission is to build work skills and create opportunities for people with employment barriers. Below are some comments based on the question: **"What does Freedom mean to you?"**

- Being happy
- Finding a different job
- Volunteering to clean the beach
- Making stuff and selling it
- Having a job
- Being a proud American
- Working four days a week
- Dating
- Visiting my sister in Minnesota
- Working a job independently
- Having time to talk with my friends, hang out and shop

"Having time to talk with my friends, hang out and shop"

Important Guidance Provided to State

Local Leaders continue to participate in the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) External Review Group of Self-Determination. MPF plans to promote planning and Self-Determination arrangements now that the workgroup has concluded its review of the MDCH Person Centered Planning Policy and Practice Guideline.

The Arc Michigan

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www.mifreedom.org



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**Building Statewide Demand
For Self-Determination**

Michigan Partners For Freedom

Michigan Partners for Freedom is a grassroots coalition of people with disabilities, family members, advocates, organizations and other allies working together to build statewide demand for self-determination.

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