



# RRTC-ILM

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3108 Main Street, Buffalo, New York 14214-1384 • (716) 836-0822 (Voice/TDD)

newsletter

## Interwoven Research

The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Independent Living Management coordinates five research activities, two training programs and two projects on various means of information dissemination, technical assistance and training. While these projects all run in parallel, the cornerstone of our RRTC is Project 1 - the National CIL Database.

The first problem we encountered was that we did not have a national picture when it came to CILs. Many existing lists identified over 1000 organizations that called themselves independent living centers and centers for independent living. The Rehabilitation Services Administration had a list of over 200 federally funded programs throughout the country but did not distinguish between the home office or satellite office. And we found no central place to access state funded programs only.

Our first task was to clearly identify the industry and to distinguish between the variety of organizations that called themselves independent living centers. We decided that we would use Federal 725 standards as a benchmark. Our staff began calling each and every center that we could identify through lists published on the web, by statewide independent living councils (SILCs), federal lists, and memberships of regional and national organizations. Each phone contact confirmed that the organization:

1. Had a board of directors with cross disability representation and a majority of persons with disabilities,

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## Compendium Of Resources for Independent Living Management

Justifying a salary increase?  
Writing a new job description?  
Working on bylaws?  
Need some help?

Help build a CIL management resource you can use!

We have more than 200 *Independent Living Organizational Surveys* in hand. We telephoned CIL directors nationwide asking for copies of documents, bylaws, job descriptions, policies and procedures, board committee descriptions, vision/mission statements and more. We are in the process of mounting this information on the web for you to access. Access will be limited to CILs that have completed the *Survey*. We will be assigning a user name and password to those who have contributed to the **Compendium**.

Why not send us your survey today? If you have already done that, why not e-mail us copies of your management documents?

### Contact:

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**Non-Profit Centers Going Entrepreneurial workshop, Buffalo, NY, August 2001**



2. Had a staff comprised of a majority of persons with disabilities,
3. Provided the four core services: peer counseling, individual and system advocacy, independent living skills, and information and referral,
4. Did not run a residential facility.

We identified over 600 centers, about half of them being federally funded. We mailed each center the Independent Living Organizational Survey. This allowed us to begin to identify what centers are doing, how they are doing, and who is doing the work of the centers.

Project 1 began to reveal trends in center development. It yielded information that assisted our other projects as well. For Project 3, the Role of CILs in Transition Services, we were able to refer the names of centers that provide youth services to our partners at the Beach Center, Kansas State University. This eliminated the need for Project 3 staff to contact every center in the country and facilitated their direct contact with those centers that provide youth services to request more in-depth information.

Project 2, Identifying Alternative Funding for CILs, was assisted as well. Our Independent Living Organizational Survey revealed over 40 CILs that were involved in entrepreneurial activities.

Project 5, Vocational Rehabilitation Partnerships, a study on collaborative programs between state vocational rehabilitation agencies and centers for independent living, received information on centers that are currently engaged in such partnerships.

Project 1 provides us with a homogeneous group of organizations with similar structures, values and outcomes. It allows us to separate a large number of organizations from the non-profit industry and to examine a variety of issues around programs, services, funding, staffing, practices and policies specific to a single group of businesses. It tells us what CILs are doing, but not how they manage it. Project

1 data gives us a picture of the independent living industry but does not identify the management needs of the centers.

To transfer management models to improve the core competencies of CILs, we need to know about the organizational management structure of an independent living center. A review of nonprofit management literature revealed several studies (Herman & Renz, 1998, 1999) that were conducted to identify the organizational management structure of nonprofit organizations. Work done by Herman and Renz (1998) reveals nine elements of nonprofit organizational effectiveness. Since our focus is on the more homogeneous group of nonprofits called CILs, our efforts would be to focus on the organizational structure of centers. Herman and Renz surveyed executive directors and board presidents to conduct their studies. Since independent living centers are consumer focused, we decided to involve all stakeholders involved in CILs for our research. We sought representation of executive directors, staff, volunteers, board members and consumers from CILs, state funding personnel and members of statewide independent living councils (for a monitoring and development perspective) from all ten federal regions.

We asked each individual what he believes to be outcomes of a successful center and to list the elements of a center for independent living. This information is being grouped according to commonalities to identify management categories. Once we identify management categories, we will go back to Project 1's national database to identify which centers have successfully achieved diversity in funding and programming. The centers that appear to be successful will be contacted. We will interview them about how they manage their center in the identified management categories. This information will then be put into a two dimensional survey sent to all CIL executive directors to verify if the successful centers' management tools:

1. Exceed what is needed to run a center and are desirable to have,
2. Are needed to operate a center,
3. Are not relevant in running a center.

The survey results will allow us to establish a baseline for CIL management. They will provide a clear direction about what type and kind of management models will be appropriate to replicate and transfer to the CIL network.

Projects 2, 3, and 5 are research activities related to the programs and activities being carried out by CILs. Information collected by Project 1 allows us to quickly identify centers that are providing that specific service and enables us to examine how successful the CILs are based upon the quantitative data also provided. Projects 3 and 5 will conduct independent research, identify successful programs for replication and training to other centers to improve both their service capacity and programming options, and possibly increase CILs' ability to find alternative funding.

Project 2 focuses on entrepreneurial activities that can support CILs which are unburdened by state and federal restrictions and mandates. This project seeks successful programs and utilizes the experience of the national network of Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) to replicate successful models. SBDC teams will assist selected centers in implementing and evaluating their success.

Projects 3B and 4B are cooperative training programs jointly developed by NIDRR funded programs. The Center of International Rehabilitation Research and Exchange (CIRRIE) and the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Aging works with RRTC-ILM to develop programs that will increase CILs' ability to provide services to foreign-born and elderly disabled. These programs will

identify areas of need and develop training materials that can be sent directly to CILs to improve their staff competency in the provision of services.

Projects 6 (Training and Technical Assistance) and 7 (Training and Dissemination for Stakeholders) are ways we are disseminating our findings and results to all CILs. We will use:

On-line training,  
Computer-based tutorials,  
Video and audio instructions,  
Face-to-face training,  
Videoconferencing, and  
Published manuals

It is our intention to utilize each of these modes of training and to evaluate the best way to disseminate information. Once we have identified the best vehicle for training, we will make all training available to the technical assistance project as well as to statewide independent living councils (SILCs) across the nation.

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-written by Douglas J. Usiak, RRTC-ILM

# Stakeholders Evaluate RRTC-ILM Training Sessions in Year One

RRTC-ILM effectively concluded its first year of operation in October 2001, the launching of its proposed training program being a highlight of the year. In addition to the workshops on culture brokering, designed for improved services to foreign-born consumers with disabilities (conducted in partnership with University at Buffalo's Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange CIRRIE), we implemented three major training workshops addressing different topics during the months of August, September and October of 2001. These workshops marked the culmination of a sequential effort of planning, materials development and course organization as per our Year One training program. They focused on: (1) *Non-Profit Centers Going Entrepreneurial*, conducted in Buffalo on August 15 and 16 in partnership with the New York Small Business Development Center (SBDC); (2) *Independent Living Philosophy and History* held in Albany on September 24; and (3) a pilot *Executive Management Simulation*, offered in San Diego on October 22-26 as a hands-on experience in a simulated environment. All participants were persons affiliated with independent living, and included board members, executive directors and staff members from centers for independent living (CILs) across the country. In all, forty participants attended these workshops: 15 present at the *Non-Profit Centers Going Entrepreneurial* workshop, 13 at the *Independent Living Philosophy and History* training and 12 at the pilot *Executive Management Simulation* workshop.

As part of their activities at each of these training events, participants filled out an evaluation questionnaire, along with pertinent demographic information, and gave us feedback on the quality of the training sessions, instructors and materials. This procedure represents a continuous evaluation component that we have built into the training program at the RRTC-ILM. And it is an effort to routinely collect participant satisfaction information at

the end of each training session. Participants respond to items on a one-page questionnaire and appraise specific aspects of the training on a scale of 1 to 5. They also comment on what they found most useful about the training, point out where we can further improve our processes and clarify their observations with concrete suggestions. We trust such feedback is essential to maintaining the high quality of the training we are committed to, and in order to keep it directed toward meeting the ongoing needs of the network of CILs that participate in our workshops.

Participant evaluations cover key aspects of training and include content, organization, instructional process, instructor and materials. The focus is not only on their intrinsic quality, for example, breadth and depth of content, clarity of objectives or accessibility of materials, but also concerns their usefulness and relevance to the participants' working context. Overall satisfaction and comfort with the social climate of the session are also important aspects assessed.

While Year One training sessions were evaluated on the common core of key aspects mentioned above, the purposes of the three workshops were somewhat different from one another. The *Non-Profit Centers Going Entrepreneurial* workshop aimed at raising participant awareness of small business development as an option for CILs to strengthen their financial bases. The other two workshops addressed knowledge and skill development. The *Independent Living Philosophy and History* training focusing on independent living history and philosophy, the essence of CIL organizations that distinguishes them from other non-profit organizations, was directed to CIL staff in general with a view to enhance the potential impact of the multimedia package of independent living philosophy materials, as well as to facilitate a multiplier effect. It was accompanied by a train-the-trainer workshop. The

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*Executive Management Simulation* was mainly for the benefit of executive directors and managerial staff. It was uniquely structured for a hands-on experience where participants were exposed, through simulation, to typical contexts in which managers seek problem resolution.

All three workshops received overall high ratings [above 4.0 on the five point rating scale] from participants, who indicated that the training met their expectations in general and were recommendable to others. They also expressed a high level of satisfaction at the social climate of the sessions, acknowledging that they felt very comfortable. On individual aspects, however, participants evaluated the three workshops differentially, holding each one valuable for meeting specific expectations and substantiating the fact through complimentary remarks in their open-ended responses. Both training content and materials were high on the list of participant expectations, and while there was high rating on these two aspects across the board, participants were in particular laudatory of the high quality and content of the training materials on independent living philosophy and history. Mention was made of "the materials" being the most useful aspect of the workshop, in particular, the training manual and leader's guide being held as promising ["look great; should be helpful"]. So were the "visuals and handouts" and "materials" acknowledged as useful aspects of the *Non-Profit Centers Going Entrepreneurial* workshop.

All three workshops were well commended for the usefulness of the content presented. Participants made special mention of the fact by identifying them by topic as for example: "systems theory," "financial planning" and "management practices" [*Executive Management Simulation* pilot]; "tax info" and "marketing analysis" [*Non-Profit Centers Going Entrepreneurial* workshop]; and "application of IL philosophy" and "content and commitment

very good" [*Independent Living Philosophy and History* workshop]. Instructors were also commended individually by name for their performance, in all three workshops. In particular, participants made a special acknowledgement of the high level of expertise of SBDC instructors. Participants of the *Executive Management Simulation* workshop observed networking and interacting with peers as an effective learning strategy. They seemed especially appreciative of the opportunity to "learn from the participants," which was "great" since "outstanding people (were) involved."

Our stakeholders were equally open about areas where the training fell short of their high expectations. Important and detailed feedback was given to individual instructors regarding process, organization, topics and materials, which will be helpful in revising the materials as well as structuring and organizing future workshops. Among the key elements that apply to all the workshops, participants felt the need for more time to learn the content and to be able to go more in-depth. They asked to "make the training longer," or to "eliminate some material" in some cases. Regarding method, participants seemed to especially like sessions with opportunities for small group discussions and networking with peers. In fact, they expressed such a preference over the "lecture" style presentations used by some instructors in some of our sessions. They enjoyed the handouts and were especially appreciative of their accessible formats, and suggested ways to achieve perfect coordination regarding their use in classroom. Equally valuable to them were the bibliographic material they received, and they requested advance receipt of such material as an effective way to prepare themselves for training. Understandably, application of the ideas presented in the workshops to the real world problems of CIL was a major learning concern. Hence, they found value in "pre-packaged information," especially as a way to "take home to use as a model to compare (the ideas

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presented in the training) to real CIL." In all three workshops, they looked for greater emphasis on unique examples from CIL context and its management in the training topics, whether it was small business development, management strategies or broad independent living philosophy.

As we continue into our second year of training, we expect to maintain the achieved quality as well as to improve performance in needed areas, while enhancing the program with further steps. We will formalize our materials testing procedures into a systematic approach, and while we continue our training evaluations, we will extend them to include the culture-brokering workshops as appropriate. A further step will also include design of follow-up evaluations of our recurring workshops. We

appreciate all the feedback given to us by our stakeholders and their constructive suggestions for ways in which to achieve the standards of excellence that commit us to fulfill their expectations. We especially share their concern about making the training program relevant to their practices, which involves not only bringing in pertinent expertise but also facilitating their meaningful transference to the reality of the independent living world. We look forward to another year of collaborative and constructive work with our stakeholders.

-written by Vathsala Stone, MS, PhD,  
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## Examining the Role of Centers for Independent Living in the Transition of Youth from Secondary Education to Adult Life

One of the studies that the RRTC on Independent Living Management (RRTC-ILM) is conducting is research to "identify best practices and develop and test programs for CILs in expanding services to youth with disabilities and their families, including those from diverse cultural backgrounds, and in interfacing with education and transition programs to prepare children and youth for independent living" (Federal Register, 2000).

In response to this priority, the Western New York Independent Living Project, Inc., subcontracted with the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas to conduct a 3-year study to: (1) analyze the literature base pertaining to best practices with regard to CIL involvement in services for youth with disabilities and their families through interactions with secondary education and transition, (2) identify promising field-based models of CILs serving youth with disabilities and their families, and (3) replicate these best and promising

practices, conduct training and disseminate information about the role of CILs in this process. This article updates readers on the activities of the Beach Center through the first year of the project and provides an overview of subsequent project activities. First, however, it might be useful to summarize why NIDRR would focus on these issues.

### Transition and Youth with Disabilities

The transition from adolescence to adulthood and school to community life is a challenge for all students, with or without the presence of a disability; however, students with disabilities experience more difficulty with and require more intensive support to succeed in this process (Peraino, 1993). As the first generation of students with disabilities who received educational programming under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) began to graduate and leave school in the 1980s, a number of follow-up and follow-along

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studies were funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs to track graduates and school leavers and to examine adult outcomes for these young people, including employment status, living arrangements, post-secondary educational access, and social/community integration. Chadsey-Rusch, Rusch and O'Reilly (1991) reviewed these studies, examining the research on employment, residential, and social/interpersonal relationship outcomes for youth with disabilities who made the transition from school to adulthood, and concluded:

The outcomes experienced by youth with disabilities for employment, residential status, and social and interpersonal relationships are disappointing. Although rates vary from state to state, most youths with disabilities are either not employed or underemployed. Few youths live independently, many are not well integrated into their communities, and some appear to be lonely. Overall, youths with disabilities face a very uncertain future that holds little promise of improving as they age (p. 28).

The National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students (NLTS), also sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs provided data regarding the adult outcomes of more than 8,000 youth with disabilities. This longitudinal study used a weighted sample which generalized to youth with disabilities across the nation (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996). The findings from this comprehensive study reinforced the need to continue to focus on transition related outcomes and to identify practices that will better enable students with disabilities to become self-sufficient young people.

- The rate of competitive employment for youth with disabilities lagged significantly behind the employment rate of youth in the general population both 2 years after high school

(46% to 59%) and 3 to 5 years out of school (57% to 69%).

- Gender, type of disability and ethnic background all impacted the probability that students would be competitively employed.
- Only 9% of competitively employed youth with disabilities two years out of school earned greater than \$6.00 per hour, and that percentage grew to only 40% by 3 - 5 years.
- Only 14% of youth with disabilities who had been out of school for 2 years reported that they attended some type of post-secondary school, compared with 53% of youth in the general population. At 3 - 5 years, 27% of youth reported having been involved in postsecondary education at some time after leaving secondary school, compared with 68% of peers in the general population.
- Thirty-three percent of youth in the general population were living independently less than 2 years after graduation, compared with 13% of youth with disabilities. By 3-5 years, 60% of non-disabled youth lived independently, compared with 37% of youth with disabilities.

Findings from the NLTS, along with results from the numerous follow-up and follow-along studies, suggested that, while youth with disabilities had made considerable gains in achieving positive adult outcomes over time, if self-sufficiency is a goal of the educational process, there was still a considerable distance to travel to achieve this.

As a result of these and other findings, the 1990 reauthorization of the federal law mandating special education services (renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in that reauthorization) included the 'transition mandates' requiring that from the age of 16 onward, transition services must be addressed

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for all students receiving special education services. Transition services were defined in the IDEA as "a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process which promotes movement from school to post school activities." [Sec. 602(a)(19)] Post-school activities are broadly defined and include post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated and supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation. The law further requires that the "coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation." [Sec. 602(a)(19)]

A subsequent reauthorization of IDEA required that schools consider transition needs even earlier (14) for all students. The transition mandates also included language requiring that students with disabilities be invited to attend their IEP meeting if transition services are to be discussed and that transition services be based on student needs, taking into account student interests and preferences. The 'student involvement' language in the IDEA is consistent with participatory planning requirements in other disability legislation, including the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA (Wehmeyer & Ward, 1995).

### **CILs and Transition Services**

Among the strategies emphasized in the IDEA for achieving the outcomes identified in the transition mandates was the active involvement of outside agencies, particularly collaborations and partnerships between and among schools and adult agencies in the planning process. Such collaboration can positively influence the success students achieve in making the transition to the adult world. Unfortunately, these partnerships have too often involved only state education agencies

and state vocational rehabilitation agencies (Hegenauer & Ginavan, 2001; Guy & Schriener, 1997; Johnson, Sharpe, & Sinclair, 1997), and not the broader array of community agencies and entities which could contribute to the transition process.

The independent living movement focuses on the rights of individuals with disabilities to live lives of their own choosing within an integrated society (DeJong, 1979). Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are the agencies which embody the independent living philosophy. They are community agencies that provide comprehensive services to, as well as extensive advocacy on behalf of, people with disabilities to increase their opportunities for independence and full community participation. Since these are intended outcomes from the transition process, it seems logical that CILs should play a meaningful role in the lives of youth with disabilities. One mechanism to achieve this would be to enable a greater number of CILs to become more actively involved in supporting, promoting and even providing transition services for youth and to collaborate more closely with public school districts. This is the intent of the RRTC-ILM's efforts in this study.

### **Project Activities**

Recently completed first year project activities were intended to identify what transition-related best practices were currently being implemented by CILs. To this end, project staff engaged in two primary activities: the conduct of a comprehensive review of the literature with regard to the role of CILs in transition services and a follow-up survey of CILs that had indicated they provided services to youth in their response to the RRTC-ILM national Independent Living Organization Survey (year 1). The follow up survey solicited more detailed information concerning the types of activities in which CILs were engaged. Project reports pertaining to both of these activities are available on the RRTC-ILM website. From the numerous

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examples of high quality services provided to youth with disabilities by CILs, ranging from self-advocacy and daily living training, to employment skills training, to self-determination training and mentoring, CILs across the country identified some of the key strategies used in transition services as activities that they valued and in which they were currently engaged. Michael Wehmeyer and project research associate, Debra Benitez, combed through the stacks of submissions to identify a set of best practices currently implemented by CILs that would be viable to replicate and disseminate information on to other CILs. Not only were we looking for innovative practices, we were also looking at other factors that impact replication and generalization. That is, we were seeking practices that did not require additional resources (money or personnel) and which might be easily incorporated into the day-to-day activities of most CILs. In addition, we were seeking activities that promoted meaningful partnerships between schools and CILs and which impacted diverse populations.

During the second year, Stelios Gragoudas, Project Director, will engage in a series of activities to replicate 3-5 sets of the best practices in CILs geographically situated near the University of Kansas which are not currently providing such services, but would be interested in doing so. Our intent is to evaluate the efficacy of these practices to ensure their generalizability outside of the original CIL providing those services, including outcomes for youth, ease of implementation, and CIL and youth/family satisfaction. We are particularly interested in replicating practices that engage CILs actively with schools and which take advantage of existing funding streams, like the Social Security Work Incentives. In the final phase of the project, we will develop print and web-based materials that describe in user-friendly terms and in detail how CILs can implement these best practices and become more actively engaged in the transition of youth with disabilities from secondary education to adulthood.

The Beach Center on Disability is pleased to be a partner in the RRTC on Independent Living Management. We look forward to interacting with more CILs as the project progresses. Readers interested in greater detail about the project can contact project director, Stelios Gragoudas, at [stelg@ku.edu](mailto:stelg@ku.edu).

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-written by Michael L. Wehmeyer, PhD and Dana Lattin, MEd, Beach Center on Disability, University of Kansas

## Culture Brokering Collaborations

RRTC-ILM is continuing its collaboration with NIDRR-funded Center for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange (CIRRIE) in providing training and resource materials on ways to strengthen independent living services to an often underserved group - foreign-born consumers. RRTC-ILM has developed a prototype of a CD-ROM training program on Culture Brokering. Based on a monograph published by CIRRIE<sup>1</sup>, the module provides training through which independent living specialists may strengthen their capacity to work with consumers from principal immigrant groups. The module complements training workshops that are presented by RRTC-ILM in collaboration with CIRRIE to independent living specialists in different parts of the country. For more information about the module or the workshop, please contact John Moffat, Project Coordinator.

RRTC-ILM is also collaborating with CIRRIE in making available to CILs the eleven-volume series of monographs on the cultures of the countries of origin of recent immigrants. The monographs are available on the CIRRIE website at <http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/mseries.html>. Printed copies, in booklet form, can be ordered from the same site.

RRTC-ILM is a co-sponsor of an international conference on *Providing Culturally Competent Disability Services to Persons Born in Other Countries*. The conference will be held in Washington, DC, May 6-8, 2002. The conference announcement is available at <http://cirrie.buffalo.edu/conference/CIRRIE2002.html>.

-written by John Stone, PhD, Director  
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<sup>1</sup> Jezewski, M. A. & Sotnik, P. (2001). *Culture Brokering: Providing Culturally Competent Rehabilitation Services to Foreign-Born Persons*. Buffalo, NY: CIRRIE.

## Survey Sez ...

By February, 2002, 215 centers completed the RRTC-ILM Independent Living Organizational Survey.

Did you know that:

- 25.6% (55) of our centers serve over 1000 consumers annually; 1.9% (4) serve over 4000 consumers annually.
- 63.7% (137) of our centers have 10 or more full time staff; 2.8% (6) have 50 or more full time staff.
- 83.3% (179) of CILs have 10 or less volunteer staff; 2.8% (6) have over 100 volunteer staff.
- 49.8% (107) of our centers provide transition services for youth.
- 54.9% (118) of CILs provide consumer-directed personal assistant services.
- 23% (50) of CILs operate with a total budget of \$200,000 or less; 19.5% (42) have operating budget totals over \$1 million.
- 22.8% (49) of CILs report having a business enterprise; 1% (3) of them earn over \$100,000 through these business enterprises.

Send us your survey!

Add your information into the mix! Let's get the real picture of independent living centers!

-written by Maureen Moffat, RRTC-ILM

# Independent Living Center Middle Management Seminars On the Web

A unique online training opportunity will be offered through a partnership between San Francisco State University (SFSU) and the RRTC-ILM. In collaboration with two independent living centers, San Francisco State University will offer the following web-based independent living center management seminars. They will be taught through pre-recorded panel presentations, web resources and other readings. Each class is held for six weeks and involves two hours per week interaction with instructors and other students. Some additional homework time on the web is part of the class.

## Background in the Core Services

This seminar covers the four federal core services and other services that are offered in most independent living centers and explores issues surrounding staff diversity. Services covered include peer counseling, independent living skills training, advocacy, information and referral, and benefits counseling. In addition to its overview of the core services, this seminar gives helpful advice and techniques on supervising staff who provide these services.

## How To Be An Effective Supervisor And Still Take Care Of Yourself

This seminar will give independent living center managers tools for supervision that will allow them to be effective with the least amount of stress. Topics to be explored include: how staff and consumer diversity affect IL service delivery, staff development and leadership, time management skills, completing required reports, dealing with difficult people, and relevant federal personnel laws.

## Instructors:

Jan Garrett, Executive Director, Center for Independent Living, Berkeley and Teresa Favuzzi, Program Manager, Independent Living Resource Center, San Francisco

## Computer Requirements:

Participants will need to have a computer with a browser (e.g. Netscape Communicator, Internet Explorer) and at least a 56K modem connection. We recommend higher levels of connectivity for better results.

## Other Requirements:

The course fee is \$30.

## For further information, contact:

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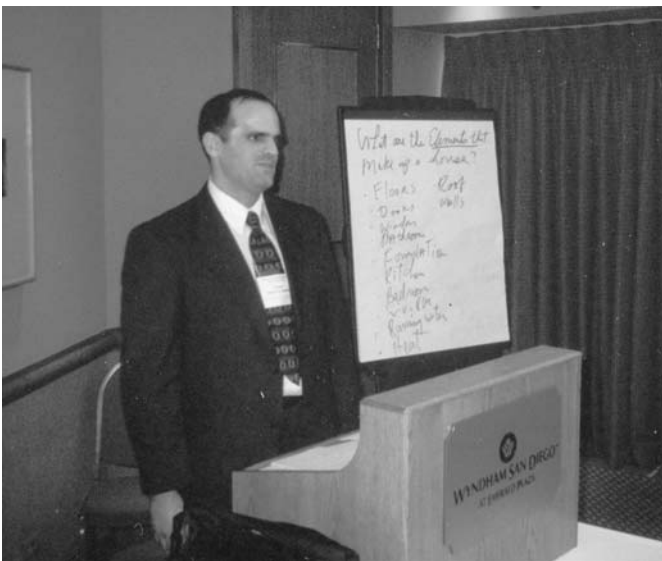
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## Survey of SILCs Provides Insight on CILs Training Needs

RRTC-ILM surveyed state independent living council (SILC) directors and chairs this year. The purpose of the survey was to obtain information on CIL executive director turnover, the number of new CILs established, and to identify SILCs' perception of the training needs of CIL directors. The survey information will be useful in the design of management training courses for directors of established and new independent living centers. It will also be useful in comparison to the CIL executives' perceptions of their own needs, information obtained in the needs survey we performed for our grant application and other reported training data. 92% of SILC directors or chairs completed the survey.



SILC Conference, San Diego, CA, October 2001

The management training needs survey asked the following question: "Please list the five management training needs for executive directors (most important first)."

The survey resulted in the following management needs (ranked in priority):

1. Financial and Fiscal Management
2. Management in General
3. Personnel and Human Resources Issues
4. Board of Directors
5. Consumers and Advocacy Issues

These results will be used in comparison to information reported in 704 forms. A report on the results of the complete survey will be published later this year. We would like to thank SILC directors and chairs for responding to the SILC Survey.

-written by Ronald B. House, PhD, RRTC-ILM



Add information about your CIL to the growing information profile. We have over 200 Independent Living Organizational Surveys. A real picture of our industry is emerging.

# Executive Management Simulation for CILs is a Success!

Thirteen participants attended a pilot workshop called *Executive Management Simulation for CILs*, held October 22-26th in San Diego.

The course is a result of the RRTC-ILM study of management models of community-based organizations. Organizational "elements" and "outcomes" derived from the research are incorporated into the simulation as learning objectives. Participants are assigned to teams. A team of four members function collectively as the executive director of an independent living center. The team is challenged by a series of issues that illustrate the decision-making process. One year's operating activities of a CIL are compressed into the four-day training event. As in real life, the rapid period of simulated events provides a realistic independent living center setting. Participants gave the simulation an excellent rating.

RRTC-ILM developed a computer-based Executive Tool Kit of management information collected from CILs across the country. Each team has immediate access to this information in accessible format throughout the training.

This pilot course was co-sponsored by the State of California Department of Rehabilitation and the California Foundation for Independent Living. RRTC-ILM appreciates their sponsorship and the continuing support these organizations give to the field of independent living. Future courses are planned and co-sponsorship with state membership organizations, SILCs and regional continuing education programs is being sought.

-written by Ronald B. House, PhD, RRTC-ILM



Executive Management SIM workshop, San Diego, CA, October 2001



# Lynchburg Area Center for Independent Living

January 15, 2002

John Moffat, Project Coordinator  
Rehabilitation Research & Training Center  
3108 Main Street  
Buffalo, New York 14214

**RE:** Follow-up to Non-Profits Going Entrepreneurial  
August, 2001, Buffalo, NY

Greetings John,

We wanted to provide some follow-up about how we have capitalized on the "Non Profits Going Entrepreneurial" workshop. The workshop changed our perspectives and attitudes, provided us with super information, and exposed us to excellent role models to replicate. At this time we can credit the workshop for five impacts on our organization.

One of the first things we did after the workshop was to evaluate who we are. The Lynchburg Area Center For Independent Living is a business that is also a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. The entrepreneurial spirit of our management and Board of Directors ensures we have no budget deficits. We differ from businesses in the for-profit sector in at least eight ways:

1. We have certain tax advantages we may pass on to contributors.
2. We exist because people know that we are making a difference in the lives of the persons we serve and because we are an economic benefit to our community.
3. Our mission is to better our society, not show a profit.
4. We strive for the time when we may be put out of business because we are no longer needed to help persons live more independently in our Society.
5. Our Board of Directors are volunteers who may not financially gain from our organization.
6. We have certain tax disadvantages, such as more regulations that prevent us from being profitable from quarter to quarter. This results in many management challenges including competitive salaries and benefits, employee retention and training, and less than desired facilities and resources for conducting our mission.
7. We hire people with disabilities. This usually means our employees are no longer receiving tax funded public assistance, but instead are contributing to society, paying taxes, FICA, etc. It is also a good and helpful niche in our market.
8. Our business products are the services provided by our qualified staff.

Secondly we evaluated what is needed for our business to be successful. We found that we need to

do "Best Practices" with customer services. We also need to acknowledge who our "customers" are; they are not only our consumers, but are our referral sources and potential referral sources, our funding sources, our Board, and at times, each other.

Third, we started thinking more like a successful business by doing more analysis and planning. We implemented "bonuses" with staff for those times when things are going great. For example, because of staff frugality and finesse (their better use of analysis and planning) we are currently running a "profit" and as a result in the last four months staff have been granted/taken additional paid leave days. We want our most important employees to not be the least appreciated!

Fourth, we are marketing ourselves more as a business, not just a Center for Independent Living. We are small (around \$250,000 annual budget) but we are an economic asset to our area, a stimulus, an investment. Also our consumers number around 150,000 in the geographical area we serve (number of persons with disabilities according to Census Data). That is a nice sized market, not only for us but for other businesses as well.

Fifth, we are actively researching how we may develop new revenues and for profit ventures. We haven't identified any grand or new design yet, but are consciously trying to position our organization for this. We have "gone public" to let others know we are available for various "contractual" relationships. That has resulted so far in Virginia Western Community College (in Roanoke, VA) contracting with us to both develop and instruct a 3 credit hour course called "Grants Development." They paid us to design the course, curriculum, class activities and outlines, and to teach the class. This is a new course in this part of the state and the market is good. That class ended in Dec. 2001 with all the students highly recommending more be done! We are currently in dialogue with Central Virginia Community College in Lynchburg, to replicate the class for them. We are also looking at teaching Public Speaking, and developing instructional opportunities for persons with disabilities to become certified mediators (conflict resolution, alternatives to dispute resolution).

All of this attention to developing new revenue opportunities for our organization is a challenge and accomplishment. When we first "went public" we actually had other CIL's tell us we couldn't do those things because it didn't directly involve persons with disabilities. Our response has been, "these activities are not only a business venture for us, but also help prepare us to provide more services for persons with disabilities." We call their attitudes "the non-profit way of thinking," meaning they have yet to see things more from a business perspective. Gaining from the entrepreneurial spirit requires staff and board education and support.

In summary, the workshop in Buffalo has had several positive implications on our organization. Thank you again for the chance to attend the workshop. Hope this helps and if needed we would gladly provide more information.

Sincerely,

Walter Sabin  
Executive Director

Dana Jackson  
Administrative Assistant

Class of Buffalo, August 2001

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