



Fall 2001

CommunicAbility

Edition 4

Please visit the **New Horizons Un-Limited** website for more valuable information!

<http://www.new-horizons.org>

We need your advice to inform others and to address common concerns. Contact **New Horizons Un-Limited Inc.** by e-mail at:

horizons@new-horizons.org

National News

You can make a difference – become a mentor

Whether you are young or old, have a disability or not, you can step up to the challenge of mentoring. There are many individuals looking for direction, looking for an extended hand, in an effort to find independence in their lives. Each of us possesses a piece of knowledge or expertise that can shape the lives of many. Mentoring can take many forms, be it a professional guiding a student, or a young adult guiding a pre-teen. We must not fail to recognize our individual capacity to affect lives or to offer guidance to those who seek it. You need not apply to be a mentor, rather make a conscious effort each day to offer your knowledge to those who may benefit. If you would like to mentor in a more formal capacity, your local Center for Independent Living (CIL) may be able to pair you with an individual. Visit New Horizons Un-Limited: Independent Living at <http://www.new-horizons.org/astcil.html> to find a CIL in your area.

National Organization on Disability asks, "how accessible is your city or town?"

The National Organization on Disability (NOD), has announced a \$25,000 "Accessible America 2001" award competition in which cities and towns will "showcase how their citizens with disabilities are participating in and contributing to their communities." Mayors of cities and towns across the United States are encouraged to submit a three page statement discussing the extent to which citizens with disabilities can access jobs, education, religious worship, voting, transportation, housing, and the full range of local, social, recreational, cultural, and sports activities. Entries must be received by December 31, 2001. If you feel your city or town is making great strides in bringing equality and accessibility to individuals with disabilities, encourage your mayor to enter. For more information, call (202) 293-5960 or e-mail starnesn@nod.org.

Contacting your representative made easier by United States House of Representatives online service

United States House of Representatives offers an online service in which individuals interested in contacting their district's representative can search by state and zip code and can then send a text message to their selected representative. It is time to make your voice heard! Make sure your Representative hears your concerns. Visit <http://www.house.gov/writerep/> to access this service.

News for the Health of it!

Hill-Burton Act may help you obtain the health care you need

The Hill-Burton Program began in 1946 when the United States Congress granted hospitals and other health facilities funds in return for their commitment to "provide a reasonable volume of services to persons unable to pay and to make their services available to all persons residing in the facilities area."

So what does this mean for you? Well, this means that you may qualify for free or low-cost health care if your income falls within the poverty guidelines published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. However, all Hill-Burton Facilities, located throughout the United States can choose which types of services will be provided at no charge or reduced charge.

To learn more about this program or to see if you may qualify, call the toll-free HOT LINE at (800) 638-0742.

FEMA suggests ways in which you can assist people with disabilities in a disaster

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers a great resource for anyone who knows an individual with a disability.

Following are a few things one must take into consideration while providing assistance to an individual with a disability during a disaster.

- Deaf and hard of hearing individuals may not hear audible emergency warnings. Be their source of emergency information.
- Blind or visually impaired individuals may have hesitance to leave familiar surroundings without assistance from a trusted friend or coworker. Be their guide.
- Mobility impaired individuals may need substantial assistance during evacuation. Learn the proper way to transfer an individual in a wheelchair and find out the best exit routes.

- Cognitively impaired individuals may not understand the urgency of the disaster evacuation. Lead them as calmly as possible to safety.

- Various disabilities require a strict prescription regime. Make certain extra medication is easily accessible in the event of a disaster.

The best way to prepare for a disaster is to form a self-help network among coworkers and / or neighbors. Such a network will designate individuals that will assist a person with a disability throughout an emergency situation.

Above all, talk to those you know with disabilities and ask them about the assistance they think they may need. You may also want to assist in preparing a disaster supplies kit.

For more on this subject, visit the FEMA website at <http://www.fema.gov/r-n-r/assistf.htm>

Wisconsin News

EBTIDE Homebuyer Grant Program can make homeownership a reality for Wisconsin residents with disabilities

EBTIDE Homebuyer Grant Program offers individuals with disabilities or families with a disabled family member an opportunity to purchase their own home. The program grants eligible individuals or families \$7500 to be used towards down payment, closing costs, or home modifications.

The grant becomes forgivable as long as the home is not sold within five years of purchase. To be eligible for this program, family income must not exceed 60% of the county median income. To learn more about this opportunity call (888) 838-9021.



We here at New Horizons Un-Limited Inc. wish to extend our thoughts to all those affected by the events of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. May we all find strength and courage from each other and our nation.