

The LINK

Changing Lives.
Changing Communities.

A Publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan

Be sure to be counted in the 2010 Census

What is the Census?

The Census is a count of everyone living in the United States. It is required by the U.S. Constitution.

Who should be counted?

All U.S. residents must be counted -- both citizens and non-citizens.

When will my Census questionnaire be mailed to me?

Look for it in your mailbox during March 2010.

How do I participate in the Census?

Complete and mail back your questionnaire as soon as you can after it arrives in the mail. Households that do not return a questionnaire will have a Census-taker visit the household to do an in-person count.

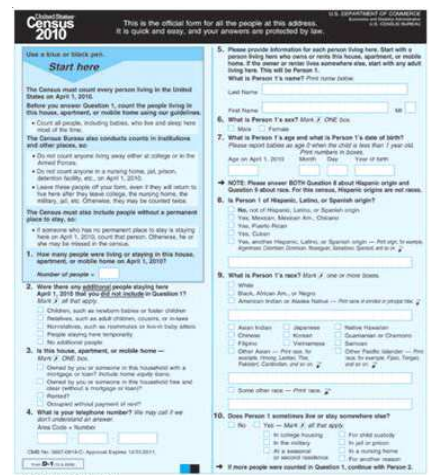
What if I want or need help filling out my Census form?

Beginning March 19, 2010 Questionnaire Assistance Centers (**QAC**) will be located throughout Southwest Michigan. Census employees will help you fill out your form.

Disability Network's office in Kalamazoo will be a QAC on Tuesdays and Thursdays from March 23 through April 20, 2010.

Why is the Census important?

Having a true count of all people living in an area will help decide how federal money is divided up for things like public transit, services for people with disabilities, schools, and more. It also decides how we are represented in the legislature.



Educating and Empowering People with Disabilities to Create Change in Their Own Lives and Advocating for Social Change to Create Inclusive Communities.

This issue is available in alternative format upon request.

www.dnswm.org

Disability Network is the first stop for people with disabilities and their families in Southwest Michigan.



Come see us at community events around Southwest Michigan

March 6, 2010 in Benton Harbor

Come to the **Community Awareness Show** event from 10:00 am - 6:00 pm at The Orchards Mall to learn about a wide range of community resources and services, including Disability Network!

March 6, 2010 in South Haven

Visit the 3rd annual **South Haven Health & Lifestyle Expo** at the First Baptist Church sponsored by South Haven Area Senior Services from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. Learn about community resources or participate in a Red Cross blood drive.

April 19, 2010 in Mattawan

Disability Network will be at the **Senior & Veterans Expo** from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm at the Antwerp Township Hall in Mattawan. This event is hosted by State Representative Tonya Schuitmaker and State Senator Tom George.

All American Roll Models

All American Roll Models (AARM) was formed in December of 2008 by four spinal cord injury survivors.

Their mission is to provide support services to individuals with physical disabilities.

Membership is **free** to people with and without disabilities.

To learn more, visit their website at www.allamericanrollmodels.com, call AARM President Brian Culver at (269) 998-1573, or check out their page on Facebook.



AT Loan Fund

The Assistive Technology Loan Fund (ATLF) provides loans for home accessibility & assistive devices to qualified people with disabilities and seniors.

The loan program is a partnership between Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, UCP Michigan, and Option 1 Credit Union.

More information and application packets can be found at www.michiganloanfunds.org or by calling Lewis Whalen at Disability Network at (269) 345-1516 or (877) 674-5209.

Register now for a **How, When & Why to Disclose a Disability to an Employer** workshop:

March 17, 2010	Battle Creek	10 am - 12 noon
March 31, 2010	Hastings	1 pm - 3 pm

Medicare Extra Help

Do you have Medicare and need help paying for premiums, co-pays or deductibles?

The "Extra Help" Program and the Medicare Savings Program are available to help people who have Medicare and need help to pay for:

- Prescription premiums, co-pays & deductibles
- Medicare Part B premiums, co-pays & deductibles

To find out if you may be eligible for this extra help call Crystal at Disability Network at (269) 345-1516 or 1-877-674-5209.



Find us on Facebook

Disability Network Southwest Michigan serves Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph & Van Buren Counties

Check out these events at Kalamazoo Valley Community College!

Tales of a mad, mad, mad ASL world

What: Trix Bruce will perform amazing feats of American Sign Language skill, taking audience members on a roller coaster ride through ASL poetry, storytelling, and folk tales. Learn more about Trix at www.trixbruce.com.

When: March 19, 2010 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Where: Kalamazoo Valley Community College Dale Lake Auditorium (room 1560)

Cost: \$7 before March 18 or \$10 at the door \$5 for children under 12 & seniors 65+

Tickets are on sale 2/18 through the KVCC bookstore. Call (269) 488-4030 for ticket information.

Voice interpreted.

Call Su at (269) 488-4862 or e-mail widibits@aol.com for more information.

Kentwood Rollers Invitational Wheelchair Basketball Tournament

What: A two-day wheelchair basketball tournament hosted by the Kentwood Rollers.

When: Saturday & Sunday, March 20th & 21st

Where: Kalamazoo Valley Community College
6767 West "O" Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49003

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Cost: No charge to attend - donations accepted

Food will be available

Great family fun!

This event is being coordinated and supported by All American Roll Models (AARM). www.allamericanrollmodels.com



Membership has its rewards!

Become a **member** of Disability Network Southwest Michigan and enjoy the following benefits:

- Subscription to our newsletters, *The Link* and *The Donor Connection*
- A reusable canvas grocery bag featuring Disability Network's logo
- Invitation to the Annual Meeting & other events
- A vote during the annual election and/or special meetings of the membership
- Notification of volunteer opportunities
- Opportunity to serve on a committee
- The satisfaction of knowing you are part of a dynamic organization that creates real change right here in Southwest Michigan



If you are interested in supporting Disability Network by becoming a member, contact Kristen Potts at (269) 345-1516, ext 119.

Membership is only \$15 a year for an individual or \$25 for a household. You may request that your membership fee be waived.

Support Groups at Disability Network in Kalamazoo

These groups meet at Disability Network's Community Building, which is located at 517 E. Crosstown Parkway in Kalamazoo.



Blind Starfish: This self-help group meets the 2nd Tuesday of most months at 7:00 pm. Call Ron at 383-1544 for more information.

Brain Injury Survivors: This group meets every Thursday from 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm. Call Miranda at (269) 345-1516 extension 120. Open to anyone with a brain injury.

Women with Disabilities: This group meets every Tuesday from 11:00 am - 12:30 pm. Call Lisa at (269) 345-1516 extension 108. The group is open to women over 18 with any type of disability.

Spinal Cord Injury Survivors: Meets periodically throughout the year. Contact Karen at (269) 345-1516 extension 115. This group is being facilitated by All American Roll Models.

Find other disability-related support groups in Southwest Michigan on our website at www.dnswm.org/support_groups.aspx.

If you know of a support group for people with disabilities that needs to be on our list, let us know!



Help us save money and trees: **Sign up to receive this newsletter by e-mail!**

Contact Michele at mmcgowen@dnswm.org or 1(877) 674-5209.



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