

The LINK



A publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan



Join Us in Celebration of the 28th Anniversary of the ADA

Disability Network Southwest Michigan will host a community-wide celebration of the 28th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please join us on Friday, July 27 at our Kalamazoo office (517 E. Crosstown Parkway) from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for a free lunch, presentations and awards ceremony. This year's Keynote speaker is Tamara Jorkasky from the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources who will be presenting on the topic of Universal Design.

The ADA anniversary celebration has become an annual tradition at Disability Network as we gather with our customers, community partners, neighbors and elected officials to celebrate the passage of this important civil rights legislation which grants protection against the discrimination of people with disabilities.

For more information about our ADA celebration, visit our website (www.dnswm.org). This event is free and open to the public. If you have questions, contact Kristen Potts at pottsk@dnswm.org or (269) 345-1516 x119.



Thank you to Kalamazoo Valley Community College for allowing us to use their parking lot just behind our building on Dutton Street for this event. Look for the ADA event parking signs.



Disability Pride Workshops

Society sends messages to people with disabilities that disability is “bad” — something we should fix, change or hide.

We don't agree!

At our Disability Pride workshops we will explore and celebrate our disabilities as an important part of who we are.

Join Us for Pride Events throughout the Region.

These free workshops are for people with disabilities and presented by people with disabilities. Select the location that works best for you.

These workshops are free; however, we ask that you pre-register with Miranda at grunwellm@dnswm.org or 269-345-1516 x120. Let us know if you need an accommodation to attend.

St. Joseph:

Friday, August 10 | 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Disability Network Southwest Michigan
2900 Lakeview Ave., St. Joseph

Kalamazoo:

Friday, August 24 | 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Disability Network Southwest Michigan
517 E. Crosstown Pkwy., Kalamazoo

Battle Creek:

Friday, September 21 | 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
The Kool Family Community Center
200 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek

For more information, visit our website at www.dnswm.org.

Our Publications:

The LINK is our quarterly newsletter, available in printed format or emailed in electronic format.

Disability Digest is a monthly e-newsletter focused on Disability Rights issues and upcoming Disability Network happenings. Available in electronic format only.

You can sign up online for our publications at www.dnswm.org, or contact Dale at abbottd@dnswm.org or (269) 345-1516 x123.

Current and past issues of our publications are available on our website at www.dnswm.org.

This newsletter is available in alternative format upon request.

Support Our Work:

You can help support the work we do with a tax-deductible donation to Disability Network. Visit our website to donate online or call Kristen at (269) 345-1516 x119.



Find us on
[Facebook](#)

Disability Network Southwest Michigan

Serving 8 counties in
Southwest Michigan:

BARRY
BERRIEN
BRANCH
CALHOUN
CASS
KALAMAZOO
ST. JOSEPH
VAN BUREN

Office Locations:

517 E. Crosstown Pkwy
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
(269) 345-1516

2900 Lakeview Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 985-0111

For the accessibility and well-being of our employees and visitors, Disability Network Southwest Michigan is a fragrance-free office. Please do not wear perfume, cologne or other scented products when visiting.

Mission Statement:

We educate and connect people with disabilities to resources while advocating social change.

Vision Statement:

Our vision is a community that values disability as human diversity, free of attitudinal barriers, where all people benefit with full access and inclusion.

Say YES to Seniors in Kalamazoo County!

Disability Network Southwest Michigan is proud to be a partner of the *Say Yes to Seniors* campaign—the Senior Millage Planning Committee in Kalamazoo County. Kalamazoo is one of only ten counties in the state of Michigan that does not have a senior millage.



The proposed millage would be used to support in-home and community services for seniors. This encompasses basic needs, such as home safety and repair, including ramps, home delivered meals, and in-home care services. Successful passage of this millage would make a significant difference in keeping seniors safe and living independently in their own homes.

More than 50,000 seniors (age 60+) live in Kalamazoo County. Thousands lack the physical, emotional, mental, or financial means to care for themselves

fully. A Senior Millage will provide essential, affordable services for these vulnerable citizens and their caregivers and help them age in place with the safety, dignity, and quality of life they deserve.

The millage being sought by this campaign is a modest .35 mill increase which

equates to \$35 a year (less than \$3 a month) for a home with a taxable value of \$100,000. However the impact for seniors in Kalamazoo is a significant \$2.8 million annually for six years.

For more information about the Say Yes to Seniors campaign visit their website at www.sayyestoseniors.org.

If you live in Kalamazoo County, mark your calendar and be sure to get out and **vote on August 7** to support independent living and the needs of seniors in our community!

Meet the Newest Members of our Team



Laurie Grimm



Max Hornick



Pam Burpee

Laurie Grimm is our Ramp-Up Coordinator. Laurie will be working out of our Kalamazoo office and serving all 8 counties in our region.

Max Hornick is our Travel Trainer & Transit Outreach Specialist in Kalamazoo County.

Pam Burpee is our Advocacy Coordinator. Pam will be working out of our Kalamazoo office and serving all 8 counties in our region.

RAMP-A-THON

Disability Network's annual Ramp-a-Thon kicks off at the ADA celebration on July 27. Ramp-a-Thon raises money to construct or purchase ramps for people with mobility disabilities across our service area. A ramp makes it possible to do something as basic as getting to the mailbox, as important as getting to doctor appointments, and as critical as being able to get out of their home in the event of an emergency. Ramps allow everyone equal opportunity to be a vibrant part of their community.

Please consider a donation to Ramp-a-Thon between now and August 31. You can make a donation at our ADA celebration on July 27, donate online at www.dnswm.org or drop a check in the mail to:

Ramp-a-Thon / Disability Network
517 E. Crosstown Parkway Kalamazoo, MI 49001

Charting the Course: Meet Joyce

Joyce is 80 years old and lives alone. Her right leg was amputated above the knee and she was feeling trapped in her home because it was very difficult getting in and out without assistance. Disability Network Southwest Michigan collaborated with Senior Services of Southwest Michigan to raise the funds and the volunteer crew to build a ramp on Joyce's home.

Joyce is very grateful to now be able to leave her home, access Metro County Connect van service and move around her community independently. It is also a relief to Joyce to know that in the case of an emergency, she will not be trapped in her house.

Our Ramp-Up program is one way Disability Network helps prepare people with disabilities for their path forward. At Disability Network Southwest

Michigan, we are helping people with disabilities chart their course to increased independence in a more inclusive community. We cannot do this important work without your support. To learn more about our programs and services, visit our website at www.dnswm.org or find us on [Facebook](#).



LUNCHTIME BOOK CLUB

The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

We will be discussing the book AND watch the movie! Join us in either our Kalamazoo or St. Joseph office.

Wednesday, August 1, 12:00 noon–2:30 p.m.
Meets in both our Kalamazoo & St. Joseph offices

RSVP: Kalamazoo
Leatrice
fullertonl@dnswm.org
(269) 345-1516 x118

St. Joseph
Cindy
grayc@dnswm.org
(269) 985-0111

This month
Book &
MOVIE!



Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal. But when a gorgeous plot-twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten.

Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, *The Fault in Our Stars* is award-winning-author John Green's most ambitious and heartbreaking work yet, brilliantly exploring the funny, thrilling, and tragic business of being alive and in love.

For more information about the Lunchtime Book Club, visit www.dnswm.org/connect/book-club.

WORKSHOP

Ableism 101: Everything you know about disability is (probably) wrong!

a·ble·ism
/ˈābəˌlɪzəm/

In its simplest form, ableism is the belief system that tells us it is better to be non-disabled than it is to be disabled. Ableism also examines disability discrimination on a systemic level by looking at the ways our society designs physically and socially segregated systems.

Join us as we discuss and dismantle harmful cultural ideas around disability.

At this workshop you will have the opportunity to:

- Explore how the language we use around disability is a key component to supporting equality or perpetuating stigma
- Identify and challenge your own unconscious bias around disability
- Learn how to support the disability rights and disability justice community in Southwest Michigan

This workshop is being offered in two locations; choose the one that works best for you.

Kalamazoo:
Wednesday, September 19
1:30 – 4:00 p.m.
517 E. Crosstown Parkway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

St. Joseph:
Wednesday, September 26
1:30 – 4:00 p.m.
2900 Lakeview Avenue
St Joseph, MI 49085

Register: Workshops are free; however, we ask that you pre-register by contacting Miranda at grunwellm@dnswm.org or (269) 345-1516 x 120. Let us know if you need an accommodation to participate.



Disability Network Southwest Michigan

517 E Crosstown Parkway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001

www.dnswm.org



Sign up for our
**electronic
publications!**
Details inside

Seeking Board Members

Are you looking for a way to become more connected to Disability Network? Do you want to have an active role in the future of Disability Network? If so, we are looking for YOU! We are now accepting applications for members of the board of directors and committees of the board. Please contact Kristen Potts at pottsk@dnswm.org or 269-345-1516, ext. 119 for more information.

