

The LINK

Changing Lives.
Changing Communities.

A publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Held each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month is a time to celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for this year—which marks 70 years since the first observance—is “My Disability is One Part of Who I Am.”

National Disability Employment Awareness Month is led by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. The purpose of National Disability Employment Awareness Month is to educate people about disability employment issues and help to foster a more inclusive workforce, one where every person is recognized for his or her abilities—every day of every month.

Disability Network Southwest Michigan is hosting a series of “Employment and Disability” workshops in the month of October. See the story on page three about the workshops or visit the Events page of our website:

www.dnswm.org/connect/events.

To learn more about National Disability Employment Awareness Month, visit the website of the Office of Disability Employment Policy at the US Department of Labor at: www.dol.gov/odep/topics/ndeam.

Two Office Locations

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

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

*This issue is available
in alternative format
upon request.*

www.dnswm.org

**My disability
is one part of
who I am.**

At work, it's what people
can do that matters.

**National Disability Employment
Awareness Month —
Celebrating 70 Years!**



OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
dol.gov/odep



Exercise Your Right to Vote!

It's hard not to notice that election season is upon us. Disability Network Southwest Michigan strongly encourages everyone to exercise their right to vote!

In September we held several workshops throughout our area to help people with disabilities feel more comfortable with the voting process. The workshops included a hands-on demonstration of how to use the AutoMARK voting machine. The AutoMARK is designed to accommodate a number of disabilities with features such as audio format, large print, a braille keypad, and a puff and sip switch port.

By federal law, each polling location must include at least one AutoMARK voting machine. If you require assistance using the machine or completing your ballot, you can bring someone with you to help you or ask the polling staff to assist you. People with disabilities can also request an absentee ballot in advance, in which case you will complete your ballot at home and mail it in.

The Michigan Secretary of State's Office provides a very helpful website where you can find out if you are registered to vote, where your polling location is and even view a sample ballot for your specific voting precinct. Check it out at www.michigan.gov/vote.



Photo courtesy of Herald Palladium/Ralph Heibutzki

St. Joseph Township Clerk Denise Cook shows Stevensville resident Emily Kowerduck how to vote on the AutoMARK.

KNOWember is coming!

During the month of November, we will be sharing facts and tidbits related to disability history, the ADA, Disability Network, and other disability-related topics. Look for "Did You Know" posts on our facebook page throughout the month of November.

We will also be holding **KNOWember** events at both our Kalamazoo and St. Joseph offices. Bring your lunch and join us for a movie and discussion about the history no one ever taught you in school! Both films will be shown with open captions. Everyone is welcome.

St. Joseph Office on November 4

Movie: Lives Worth Living

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.

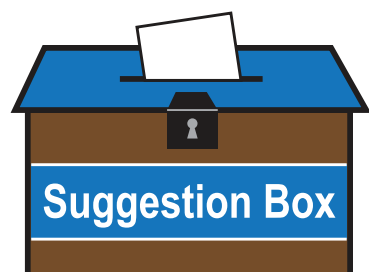
RSVP to Joanne (269) 982-7761

Kalamazoo Office on November 9

Movie: The Great Fight for Disability Rights

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.

RSVP to Miranda (269) 345-1516 x120



We are open to suggestions!

Do you have a suggestion for us about how we can serve you or our communities better? In addition to the suggestion box in our Kalamazoo office, we encourage you to send us your suggestions through our website. You can go to the Contact Us page of our website (under the Connect menu option) and send us a message with your feedback and suggestions at any time!

www.dnswm.org/connect/contact-us

Employment & Disability Workshops in October

In conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness month, Disability Network Southwest Michigan is holding an Employment & Disability Workshop in three different locations. Select the location that works best for you.

Interviewing for a Job When You have a Disability or Medical Condition How, When & Why to Talk About It



What do I have to tell an employer about my medical condition or disability?

Should I tell them about my medical condition during the interview or can I wait until after I'm hired?

What if I need to do my job differently than co-workers?

*Can they fire me because of my disability?
What are my rights?*

Join us for this workshop to learn more about:

- The only reason you have to tell an employer about your disability or medical condition
- The best way to ask for an accommodation at work
- Your rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Disability and employment resources that can help you

Attend at any of these three locations:

Battle Creek

Monday, October 19

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Financial Opportunity Center
15 Capital Avenue

Register with Miranda
(269) 345-1516 OR
grunwellm@dnswm.org

St. Joseph

Tuesday, October 20

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Disability Network
2900 Lakeview Ave



Register with Joanne
(269) 982-7761 OR
johnsonj@dnswm.org

Kalamazoo

Thursday, October 22

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Disability Network
517 E. Crosstown Parkway



Register with Miranda
(269) 345-1516 OR
grunwellm@dnswm.org

This workshop is free and open to the public. Let us know if you need an accommodation to participate.

This is a fragrance-free environment. Please do not wear perfume, cologne or other scented products to this event.

Holiday Schedule

Just a reminder . . . our offices will be closed on the following dates:

- **Thursday & Friday, November 26 & 27**
- **Friday, December 18**
- **Wednesday, December 23 through Friday, January 1**





Now you can support us while you shop online!

Disability Network Southwest Michigan is now registered as a designated charitable organization of the AmazonSmile program. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know—the same products, prices, and service; but now when you order your items through smile.amazon.com and name us as the charitable organization, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Disability Network Southwest Michigan.

Support Disability Network's programs and services by shopping at smile.amazon.com.



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