

# The LINK

Changing Lives.  
Changing Communities.

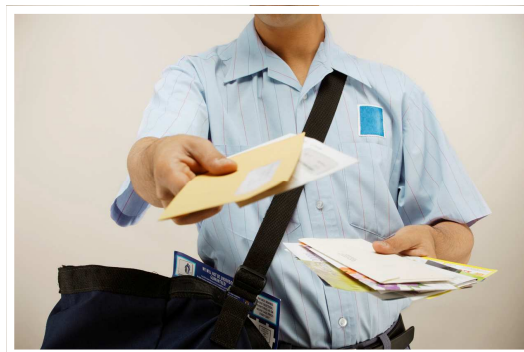
## A Publication of Disability Network Southwest Michigan

### Social Security Overpayments

#### *What To Do When The Social Security Administration Says You Owe Them Money*

If the Social Security Administration believes it has paid you benefits when they should not have, you may receive a formal Notice of Overpayment. This notice will contain:

- The amount of the overpayment
- A detailed explanation of the cause of the overpayment
- Repayment options
- A statement of your right to appeal the overpayment



#### **Do not ignore the Notice of Overpayment.**

You have the right to challenge an overpayment but there may be time limits.

Your three options in cases of overpayment are:

- 1. File a Request for Reconsideration.** If you disagree with information in the letter, or believe the amount is incorrect, this option asks to have the amount of the overpayment recalculated. You must file within 60 days using SSA Form 561-U2
- 2. File a Request for Waiver.** This option is for when the overpayment was not your fault or you cannot repay it and want the overpayment forgiven. You may file at any time using SSA Form 632-BK. If you receive SSI it will be assumed that you cannot afford to repay the money.
- 3. Negotiate a Payment Plan.** If you agree with the amount and reason for the overpayment, you will need to work out a payment plan. You may request a payment plan from your local SSA office.

**Have more questions or need assistance with this process?** Call Disability Network's Information & Referral staff at (269) 345-1516 or (269) 985-0111 from Berrien/Cass Counties. You can also visit <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ssa-561.html> for copies of these forms and more.

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

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

[www.dnswm.org](http://www.dnswm.org)

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

# Join Our Disability Roundtable Discussion Series



In honor of our 30th anniversary, we are starting a year-long series of monthly discussions designed to foster a greater understanding of disability issues.

Roundtables typically start with a short introduction of the topic followed by a discussion and sharing of ideas, information, opinions, questions, and differing viewpoints.

## Berrien County

1st Tuesday/month

1:00 - 2:30 pm



Disability Network  
2900 Lakeview Ave  
St Joseph 49085

## Kalamazoo

2nd Tuesday/month

1:00 - 2:30 pm



Disability Network  
517 E. Crosstown Parkway  
Kalamazoo 49001

## Battle Creek

3rd Tuesday/month

1:00 - 2:30 pm



JONAH/The Hive  
104 Calhoun St.  
Battle Creek 49017

### October 2011: Disability Language & Etiquette

Why do disability rights activists say never to use the word "handicapped"? Do you know the courtesy rules of blindness? The disability rights movement is sometimes criticized for being too "PC"- do you agree?

### November 2011: The Disability Community Online

Connect to the wider disability community via blogs, vlogs, podcasts, listservs and online support groups. Share some of your favorite sites and learn how you can add your ideas to the online discussion.

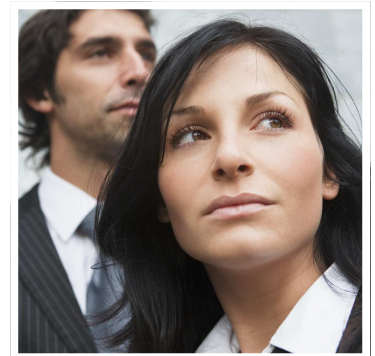
### December 2011: A Life Worth Living: Movie & Discussion

Join us and watch this new PBS film on the history of the disability rights movement and share your views.

### January 2012: Speak Up! Skills of Advocacy

What does it take to be a good advocate? Is there one "right way" to do advocacy? We all believe in and care about something. What ways can you stand up for what you believe in?

For more details & the entire schedule, view the Roundtable tab on our website [www.dnswm.org](http://www.dnswm.org) or contact Michele at 345-1516 x116.



*Accommodations provided with advance notice. Please refrain from wearing perfume or scented products.*

Find us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/DNSWM](http://www.facebook.com/DNSWM)

## CHECK YOUR DHS BENEFITS ONLINE OR BY PHONE!

[www.michigan.gov/mibridges](http://www.michigan.gov/mibridges) or 1-888-642-7434

You can now check all benefit programs by phone or online - cash, food, child care, medical & emergency assistance.

Online, you can also view your upcoming appointments, view letters from your caseworker, check the status of your application, find out your ongoing benefit amount, and learn what your caseworker needs to process your application.

Starting in January 2012 you will be able to apply for all assistance programs online, report changes online, and submit required documents online.



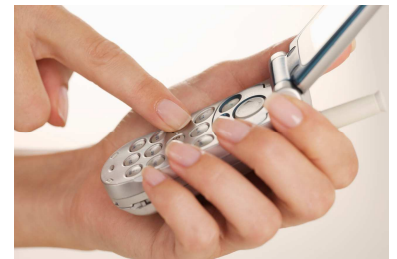
## SDA BENEFIT UPDATE

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has removed Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) as an eligibility factor for receiving State Disability Assistance (SDA). This means that the "verification of MRS status" form 4698 is no longer valid. Only DHS can determine if you are eligible for SDA.

## CALL US WITH YOUR DISABILITY RELATED QUESTIONS

Disability Network Southwest Michigan is here to listen, help you problem solve, and connect you to resources and information about disability issues.

Call (269) 345-1516 to talk to our Information & Referral Specialists. In Berrien and Cass Counties our direct line is (269) 985-0111.



## Ask the Advocate:

### I WORK AT A SMALL HOSPITAL AND WE HAVE JUST BEEN ASKED TO HIRE A SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER FOR A PATIENT. DO WE HAVE TO?



Most likely, yes. **The key phrase used by the ADA when it comes to deaf and hearing-impaired individuals is "effective communication."** People who are deaf or hard of hearing use a variety of ways to communicate. Some rely on sign language interpreters or assistive listening devices; some rely primarily on written messages. Many can speak even though they cannot hear. The method of communication and the services or aids the hospital must provide will vary depending upon the abilities of the person who is deaf or hard of hearing and on the complexity and nature of the communications that are required.

Hospitals may need to provide an interpreter or other assistive service in a variety of situations where it is a family member or companion rather than the patient who is deaf or hard of hearing. For example, an interpreter may be necessary to communicate where the guardian of a minor patient is deaf, to discuss prognosis and treatment options with a patient's spouse or partner who is hard of hearing, or to allow meaningful participation in a birthing class for a prospective new father who is deaf. (Source: [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov))

See *Communicating with People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Hospital Settings*: <http://www.ada.gov/hospcombr.htm> for more detailed information.

Sign up to receive this newsletter by e-mail! Contact Michele at [mcgowenm@dnswm.org](mailto:mcgowenm@dnswm.org) or (877) 674-5209.

# Congratulations Volunteer of the Year: Eric Large



Disability Network Southwest Michigan is pleased to announce that Eric Large is this year's Volunteer of the Year award recipient.

Eric Large has been a passionate disability rights advocate for many years. Eric began his volunteer commitment to Disability Network over 10 years ago when he volunteered in our adaptive computer lab. Currently, he is a dedicated member of Disability Network's advocacy groups (TAG, Access and Friends of Transit) and serves on the Board of Directors. Recently, Eric was selected to be on Disability Network's Executive Committee in the role of "Officer at Large" and as Chairperson of the public policy committee.

Eric has served on the Local Advisory Committee for public transit in Kalamazoo and currently in St. Joseph County. Eric is dedicated to spreading the word about Disability Network and our mission in St. Joseph County - he staffs booths, distributes brochures wherever he goes, and uses social media to promote our services

When asked why he is so committed to the disability rights movement, Eric said: "I don't do it for myself, I do it for the next person, and quite simply, I care."

**BARRY ♦ BERRIEN ♦ BRANCH ♦ CALHOUN ♦ CASS ♦ KALAMAZOO ♦ ST. JOSEPH ♦ VAN BUREN**



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