



# solutions...

a magazine of the Illinois Department of Human Services

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Inside:

DHS Deploys OneNet

Inspiration Café

DHS Wins \$4.3 Million Bonus



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## Message from Secretary Carol L. Adams, Ph.D.



***“Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.”***

***Marian Wright Edelman***

This edition of ***Solutions...we're part of*** celebrates the accomplishments of people who approach life's dilemmas with a spirit that refuses to dwell on the "why?" of adversity, but rather the "why not?" that allows them to overcome obstacles that may seem insurmountable. For our first issue of the new year, we have stories drawn from all parts of our DHS extended family, which we hope will inspire in you what Senator Barack Obama calls the "audacity of hope" when you meet your own challenges.

The people you will meet in the following pages have one thing in common. Some call it the ability to go "above and beyond the call of duty," to "go the extra mile," or to exhibit "grace under pressure." However you choose to describe it, the common thread is the refusal to take "no," "you can't," or "it's too hard" for an answer.

As you leaf through this issue, please take time to read about the DHS customers who have struggled – for years – with quiet courage and perseverance to reclaim an independent life. Check out the story of three eighth-grade girls, who entered the Iron Chef Competition at Navy Pier – and, overcoming a bad case of stage fright, wowed the judges with their slicing, dicing and – showmanship. You can learn about two volunteers – a mental health services advocate and a consumer – who have taken on the responsibility to lead a task force with the objective of transforming the mental health system in Illinois. Then, while you're at it, take a look at the effort and ingenuity our own staff has invested in making sure that our customers are served, our systems are efficient, and our internet is accessible – for everyone.

Public service, especially the provision of human services, is not just a job, it's a calling. If this work doesn't stir your passion and excite your imagination, excellence will always elude you.

Sometimes the day-to-day struggle to meet increasing needs with shrinking resources takes a toll on our spirits. That's when it's time to review our successes, refresh our commitment, and lift up our hearts. I am proud to serve alongside all of you, and have great faith that your willingness to think creatively, work collaboratively, and do whatever it takes will keep us moving ever closer to the vibrant, synergistic, unified, full-service, client-centered agency that DHS was meant to be.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve with you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol L. Adams".

Carol L. Adams, Ph.D.

**"Much of the best work of the world has been done against seeming impossibilities. The thing is to get the work done."**

**Dale Carnegie**

## **Neither Flood nor Blackout Will Keep DHS Staff From Getting the Job Done....**

*Adversity can bring out the best in us, and sometimes rising to the occasion calls for a combination of commitment, creativity, and determination. These are a few stories about situations that inspired DHS line staff.*

**Shedding light.** The storm hit Danville and the surrounding area, including a number of small towns. It did only random damage, but it left about half of Danville without power for days – over 17,000 households.

The local office was without power from late Tuesday to Friday morning. Staff continued to provide services for the 2 full days without power. They moved tables to the lobby (where windows provided natural light) and used cell phones to call other counties and central offices to check on and process emergent actions. Staff worked in the break room (windows again) or used battery-operated lanterns to complete tasks in their offices.

It's worth noting that the majority of staff were without power and, in some instances, water, at home. Without air conditioning, the office temperature rose to over 80 each day, yet no one complained and all staff continued to provide the best service possible.

On Friday, with power restored in some areas, client flow started to increase, and requests for disaster food replacement began to rise. There were approximately 250 requests on Friday. On Monday morning, when staff arrived at work, customers were lined up for more than two-thirds of a city block. Staff received over 700 disaster food replacement requests that day.

Throughout the remainder of the week 830 additional requests came in. The volume required an assembly line approach, and staff set the goal of authorizing the replacements within 48 hours. By the end, turnaround time was down to 24 hours!

**Water, water everywhere.** Stephenson County had to deal with a different type of crisis. In 2002, the Health Department was completely flooded. With 18-24 inches of water covering the entire floor and ruining the carpet, wallboards, wall coverings and trim, the building was forced to close. However, the staff was determined to continue serving clients, and held WIC clinics both at a church and in the parking lot on nights and weekends to make sure everyone's needs were met. In addition, Family Planning services were provided at another local agency.

Client service continued this way day after day until the original office was operational once again.

**Fundraising for a special cause.** The DRS Waukegan office held its second Fall Rummage Sale September 11. The money raised was earmarked for use by the Delight Committee to fund special projects for customers, and it came in handy right away.

The six-year-old son of a customer who is deaf was killed in a traffic accident the night before. The boy's mother wanted to travel to Indianapolis for the funeral, but needed assistance to manage the trip. Staff contacted numerous resources to request financial assistance, and found a hotel willing to donate two rooms in Indianapolis.

Rick Robarts, RCD, with the help of Mala Boyce, interpreter, and Lolo Albert, Lake County Center for Independent Living deaf coordinator, did some counseling with the extended family and was able to help her coordinate the trip. Rick raised \$130 in contributions, and added a personal contribution of \$150 for food, lost wages and miscellaneous expenses.

With this support and assistance, the customer was able to make the trip to say goodbye to her son, accompanied by a group of friends from the Chicago area who traveled with her.

These are just a few examples of occasions where DHS staff went "above and beyond the call of duty" to serve our customers.

*If you know of other stories of grace under pressure, please forward them to the Solutions staff.*

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## Consumer/Advocate Team Envisions Transformed Mental Health System

**DHS and its community mental health service providers** are taking a collaborative approach to planning the conversion of the system to a fee for service model. This "System Restructuring Initiative" (SRI) is moving ahead under the guidance of a task force that includes contracted providers, families and consumers, representatives of professional and advocacy organizations, legislative staff and DHS personnel.

**Their efforts are led by co-chairs elected** by the group – one is the executive director of the Illinois Chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), and the other is a mental health services consumer. Both are passionate advocates who are working tirelessly to craft a system that works.

**Linda Denson comes to the process as a consumer**, or "a person served," as she expresses it. When asked what led her to a career as an



Linda Denson

advocate, she recounts her long struggle to come to terms with the idea of herself as someone diagnosed with a severe and chronic mental illness. After seven years of on-again, off-again treatment compliance, she was hospitalized, and her determination to be an advocate for persons

with mental illness grew out of that experience.

**She believes that the shortcomings** of the present system are partly structural. The mental health services system was founded on a crisis model, and the continuum of care to deal with issues that affect a person after they are past a crisis and hospital stay is fragmented and underfunded.

**Linda has taught hundreds of people** with mental illness how to advocate with the legislature for policy changes and for funding to support those changes. In 1992 she founded the Sankofa Organization of Illinois, which teaches leadership skills, strategic planning and development, and advocacy.

**Her vision for the SRI process** includes a number of elements: she hopes to hammer out an agreement about equitable compensation for

providers, find a way under the fee for service system to maintain organizations that rely upon paraprofessionals for service provision, and to make certain that the poor, undocumented and other non-Medicaid populations continue to receive treatment services.

**Lora Thomas joined Illinois NAMI** as its executive director six months ago bringing the experience from her long career managing not-for-profits: Headstart, Girl Scouts, the Alzheimer's Association, plus organizations serving seniors, and runaway or homeless youth.



Lora Thomas

**She sees the SRI process as an incredible opportunity to create a**

comprehensive, consumer-driven system with a wide range of choices that support families and individuals. The potential to transform the system of care rather than making incremental changes is what excites her.

**Thomas acknowledges that "organizational transformation is slow, hard work,"** even when you have all the right people and expertise at the table. She is, however, confident that this group has the vision to create a comprehensive solution.

**Denson and Thomas agree** that, at the moment, they have more questions than answers, but both believe that the level of commitment among the SRI members will lead them to the answers, and they will be able to realize their ambition to "create the best system possible."

# GRANTS ADMINISTRATION OFFICE AN UNPARALLELED SUCCESS

**The Office of Grants Administration**, a new and ambitious undertaking at DHS, has made extraordinary strides in securing grant funding since its creation in March, 2003. This department is dedicated to identifying funding opportunities for the six DHS program divisions and MIS.

**The phenomenal success** of the Grants Office began in FY04 when the department secured 13 new discretionary grants – to the tune of \$31 million dollars (as compared to \$10 million the previous fiscal year). For 2005, Grants Administration has already secured a whopping \$37 million dollars, including its largest grant ever, \$22.8 million dollars (over a three year period). This grant will provide substance abuse services for ex-offenders, allowing them to acquire vouchers for treatment at centers of their preference.

**The Office of Grants Administration is the brainchild of Dr. Carol Adams**, who created the central office to enhance DHS capacity to acquire new federal and foundation funds. In an effort to maximize grant opportunities, and to ensure greater accountability and quality assurance for the management of federal project dollars, she recruited Sharon Zhahorodnyj as the director. Through hard work and intense collaboration with the program staff, Sharon and her expert team have seen grants funding increase almost four-fold.

**Grants Administration offers two other services.** The Grants Alert System (GAS) is a customized funding database that posts hundreds of grant opportunities for human service providers, researched from a broad spectrum of sources. Staff and providers can access GAS via the web, and next year will be able to search the database by creating an organizational profile that specifies areas of interest.

Grants Administration also has a Support and Outreach area that conducts free grantsmanship workshops and technical assistance trainings throughout the state. Grants Trainer Phil Matute has conducted 43 of the very popular workshops statewide, and has trained over 1,100 people. In

addition to the structured workshops, Matute offers individualized technical assistance to workshop attendees when they have questions about applications they are preparing for submission.

**The goals** of the Grants Administration office, according to Ms. Zhahorodnyj, are “to benefit DHS as a whole by assisting program areas with their project designs, and eliminate all barriers to applying for grants.” She adds a cautionary note: “We hope that we can continue securing funding at this pace in the future, though the scope of those opportunities are contingent on the funding levels of federal programs.” At the moment, however, it’s clear that the trajectory is up, up and away.



## Developmental Center's Namesake Stops by for a Visit

by Thomas Green

**On the day before his 89th birthday** in October, Jack Mabley, his wife and daughter dropped in to see friends at the Mabley Developmental Center in Dixon.

**During that visit, Mabley reminisced** about accompanying Governor Thompson in 1987 to dedicate a new developmental center in Dixon, unaware that it would carry his name.

**The cornerstone which commemorates** this event reads, "This center is dedicated in the name of Jack Mabley, noted Chicago journalist and humanitarian who, as founder of the Forgotten Children's Fund, has given an invaluable gift to all of the citizens of Illinois."

**He later received a second surprise** -- a detailed letter from President Ronald Reagan congratulating him for his philanthropic efforts, and this center, named in his honor. He still has the letter framed on his desk.

**When the center was built** it was envisioned as a facility that would address the needs of residents remaining from the Dixon School (who had multiple sensory impairments, including deafness and blindness), and other people with disabilities. Today it is home to 108 residents.

**Mabley, a philanthropist and columnist** for the Daily Herald, has often visited the facility named after him. He describes the staff and residents at the center as the "the most unselfish and caring people in the world. It gives me a lift to have my name associated with them."



**During his most recent visit, Jack Mabley**

talked about his first encounter

with the center (then called Dixon State School) in the 1950s. At that time the facility was home to 5,000 residents, including a valiant group of young women with disabilities who called themselves the "Chin Up Club." Mabley recalled meeting them, and that they told him they wanted to "do something for people who were less fortunate."



*Jack Mabley had plenty of stories to tell during his visit to Mabley Developmental Center on October 25, 2004.*

**Mr. Mabley, a soft-spoken man, recounted** his first efforts, back in the 1960's, to provide scented soap to individuals in the Dixon and Lincoln state facilities. His efforts were so successful that the donations expanded to include other gifts and grew from filling one newspaper truck to 14 fully-loaded semi-trucks in the first year. As truck after truck of Christmas gifts was unloaded and left, he knew that they had a problem -- but a very good one -- to solve! He went on to create the Forgotten Children's Fund, which raised millions of dollars over the years for persons with developmental disabilities.

**"The public is so generous** if you communicate the situation to them," Mabley remarked.

**The Forgotten Children's Fund** has since been merged into the Tribune's Holiday Fund, but Mabley Center still benefits from the fund this time of year.

**"It's a privilege** to have this be a major part of my life and to leave behind something I can be proud of," Mabley said.

**Thomas Green is one of the DHS communications managers at the Illinois Office for Communication and Information.**

**“Self-sacrifice is the real miracle out of which all the reported miracles grew.”**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

## **An Act of Kindness...When Efforts Come From the Heart**

**Serena and Michael Smith are the parents of nine beautiful children.** They recently moved from Cook County to Savanna, Illinois where they intend to stay and raise their family.

**When the Smith family first came through the doors** of the Carroll County Family Community Resource Center (FCRC), we realized that there were many needs to be addressed. In particular, their Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) counter was at 52 months, leaving them only eight more weeks of cash assistance! After completing an intensive review with Michael and Serena, it was apparent that two things mattered to them.... their faith and family.

**The Smiths lived in a small two-bedroom trailer.** When Betsy Kinder of the Head Start program made a home visit, she decided to help the Smith family find a bigger space. The Smith family now enjoys the comfort of a three-bedroom home, which they rent with the option to buy.

**Carroll County FCRC Administrator, Cathie Dixon,** was aware of grants for Wraparound services offered through Child & Adolescent Local Area Network Services. Wraparound is a family-focused service model committed to creating individualized services on a “one kid at a time” basis to support families with children at risk for referral to DCFS.

**Dixon completed the plan and paperwork** for a services grant, and advocated for the family. A team of seven individuals approved the requests made for the Smith family, and granted over \$4000 to meet the family’s most urgent needs.

**September 14, 2004 brought a surprise** for the Smith family. Dixon called Serena and told her that she needed to be home at 3:30 “because some paper work needed to be completed.”

**Unbeknownst to Serena,** Cathie Dixon had recruited her friend, Carroll County Sheriff Jeff Doran earlier that day to assist in a shopping trip. The duo began a four-hour shopping marathon at Wal-Mart, filling eight carts with clothing, shoes, games, books, furniture, bedding, and a swing set.

**Charles Zuck was also shopping** at Wal-Mart that day and came over to say hello to Sheriff Dorn. When he realized that they were on an “early Christmas” mission, he asked how he could help. A week later, two sets of twin beds and a dining room table were delivered to the Smith family.

**When the Dixon-Doran power shopping team** arrived at the Smith Family doorstep to deliver

the items, Serena was completely in shock. The children were jumping around like little popcorn kernels, shouting “Mommy, mommy.... look what I got...mommy, mommy!”

**Meanwhile, Michael was in the basement** helping Stebbins Appliance hook up their new washer and dryer. Michael proved so handy at this task that he landed a part-time job as an installation and delivery person for Stebbins Appliance!

**The Carroll County Sheriff’s Department donated six bicycles** from their store of unclaimed bikes for the older Smith children, and Wal-Mart supplied a tricycle for three-year-old Michael.

**When Serena was asked what else she would need** for her home, she was very reluctant to request anything else. She repeatedly stated “you



*Cathie Dixon (far right) and Sheriff Jeff Doran (far left) visit the Smith Family.*

have no idea where we have been--thanks to God who is the head of my life for putting me in tune with his special appointed angels.”

**Working with the Smith family has been a refresher course in life.** The Dixon/Doran team is abundantly thankful for the opportunity to experience this story at such a personal level. They had the good fortune to see the faces of these beautiful children and witness the tears of joy from Serena and Michael.

**It couldn’t have happened without the people** who were the silent Santas in this process...the “appointed angels” of the Child and Adolescent Network and the individuals in the community who stepped forward to help to this family!

**This story was submitted by the Staff at the Carroll County Family Community Resource Center.**

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## Extraordinary Gains in Food Stamp Efficiency Brings \$4.3 Million Bonus

by Thomas Green

**How do you go from owing** the USDA \$25 million in fines to receiving a \$4.3 million efficiency bonus in two short years? Hard work and a commitment to excellence was the winning formula for DHS staff in the Division of Human Capital Development.

**Each year**, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recognizes states with outstanding performance. This year, the USDA awarded Illinois a \$4.3 million Food Stamp performance bonus, rewarding Illinois for having one of the lowest payment error rates in the nation. Illinois' error rate went from 8.75 percent in FFY 2002 to 4.8 percent in FFY 2003 – a remarkable 44 percent improvement! Illinois expects an error rate at or below the national average again this year.

**The USDA defines the payment error rate** as the percentage of total dollars issued in Food Stamp benefits that were issued in error. Illinois was one of 16 jurisdictions to receive a bonus for improved performance in administering the Food Stamp Program and merited the third-highest bonus, behind California and Texas. Our DHS program is now seen as a model for accuracy.

**Marva Arnold, the director of Human Capital Development credits** “team work and a synergistic problem-solving process” with this dramatic turnaround. She continues, “We attacked the problem from several angles, with casework and management staff working together. Analysis of error cases and increased training played a part, but the biggest factor was making an improvement in our error rate everybody’s responsibility.”

**Before the welfare reform legislation in 1995**, families receiving cash assistance through Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) were not required to engage in activities leading to employment. That expectation began to change in 1995, and from then to 1999, AFDC evolved from an income assistance program to a “welfare to work” program. In 1997, the cash assistance program became Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

**During that transition period**, many families receiving cash assistance also sought and secured employment. As part of the state’s “Work Pays” program, families were allowed to remain on TANF until their work income equaled three times their cash grant. Staff now had the added complication of

factoring a person’s earnings when calculating their food stamp benefits. Each month a customer’s food stamp benefits could change, based upon their earned income. The variability of customers’ earnings along with other unique program factors resulted in a rise in food stamp payment errors.

**Gary Terpstra, special assistant** in the Office of Policy, Training, and Program Development, notes that HCD staff managed this turnaround during a time of increasing challenges. “Economic conditions were deteriorating, case loads were up and staff levels were



*The Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Human Capital Development received a \$4,357,620 bonus check from the United State Department of Agriculture for dramatically improving the accuracy rate in its food stamp payments.*

down, but our staff stepped up and made a heroic effort to improve accuracy when calculating Food Stamp benefits,” said Terpstra.

**“Our reduced error rate is a result** of modernization efforts that have improved customer service and payment accuracy through use of technology. It means that we’re receiving an “A,” with a grade of 95 percent, when it comes to providing the correct benefit to our recipients,” said DHS Secretary Carol L. Adams, Ph.D. “This is important for families who depend on Food Stamps and means less time and money spent on resolving payment errors.”

### **It’s also important to the state economy.**

This October, over one million people in 502,127 Illinois households received Food Stamps, an increase of 13 percent over last year. Those Food Stamp benefits contribute over \$88 million each month to the Illinois economy.

**Thomas Green is one of the DHS communications managers at the Illinois Office for Communication and Information.**



"It's kind of fun to do the impossible."

Walt Disney

## DHS Wins Food Stamp Accessibility Grant

by Dianne Barghouti

*DHS efforts to serve customers  
"Online, not in line" continues to be a winner.*

**In February the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) opened up a competition** for grant proposals to increase access to the Food Stamp Program by making the application process easier and more efficient for applicants and participants.

**A group of DHS staff put their heads together** and decided that this was a great opportunity to move DHS further down the road toward Secretary Adams' vision of "online, not in line".

**They crafted and sent FNS a proposal** for several significant technical advances that would reach some of the target audiences that we know have the most difficulty gaining access to the Food Stamp Program. We were very pleased to learn in late July that FNS approved our proposal! We will receive nearly \$1 million, sharing a total of \$5 million in funding with five other states.

**First we attacked the fundamental barrier** faced by people who want and need food stamp assistance but find it daunting to visit one of our offices to start the process. They may be working people whose schedules don't easily permit them to take time out of their day to go to an office, or they may be elderly or disabled people for whom mobility is difficult. They could be anyone whose prior experience with long office waits makes them reluctant to try again.

**Now they will have another, easier way** to reach us. "Web Stamps," as we are calling this part of our project, will permit customers to transmit their applications to their local Family Community Resource Center via the web, and to have it registered in our Automated Intake System. If they are unable to visit the office, they will note that on their application and, if so, will have their interview by telephone. The worker who handles their application will have the information in the system prior to the interview.

**"Web Stamps" will give Illinois' low-income citizens direct entree** to the essential benefits of the Food Stamp Program. We will rely on our many community partners to help spread the word. We want people throughout the state to be

aware that they can go online anywhere to begin the process for receiving those benefits.

**The second part of the proposal** is targeted to a specific group of participants, working households. To continue receiving food stamps they must complete an annual recertification process that requires an application and an interview with their worker, usually in the office. These families lead busy lives that often include raising children in addition to the demands of their jobs, and we want to ease the burden involved in keeping their benefits coming each month.

**"Phone Stamps" will enable them** to complete a short, automated telephone interview in lieu of the conventional interview. The results of the telephone interview will go to the worker, who will collect any additional information needed and complete the recertification.

**Finally, the DHS toll-free telephone number** will have options added to make the food stamp calculator and office locator available to callers just as they are now to visitors to the DHS web site.

**These new procedures should be rolled out** over the next 18 months.

**Dianne Barghouti is a public service administrator in the Division of Human Capital Development.**

## Pluck and Persistence Pave the Way Back to Work

Personal Achievement Awards are given annually to DRS customers who have worked exceptionally hard to overcome extraordinary challenges and return to the workforce.

### Randy Strohl

**Randy Strohl worked as vice president** of a development company and coached basketball and track for 20 years before he injured his back in 1997. He was no longer able to work and experienced debilitating pain. After recovering from six back surgeries and countless hours of physical therapy, Strohl was determined to reclaim his life.

**Randy heard a TV report** that said only five percent of people who suffered a disability who were not back on the job within a year ever returned to work. He decided right then that he would be part of the five percent.

**He began working with DRS staff in Champaign** to realize his goal of becoming a realtor. "Circumstances happen to everybody, and they can always be overcome," said Strohl. "People who have overcome a disability and retrained to qualify for a certain position may make better employees than someone who hasn't had to struggle, because they had that desire to reach a goal."

**Today, Strohl is a self-employed** real estate agent, motivational speaker and personal development coaching facilitator.



Randy Strohl, receiving award from Tracey Nolen, the recipient of the '03 Director's Award.



Linda Starrfield (right) is pictured with Sally Berweiler, who nominated her for the Director's Award.

### Linda Starrfield

**Four years ago Linda Starrfield** was a busy professional who also made time for community service and her friends. An auto accident left her legs so damaged that doctors predicted she would not be able to walk again. Linda battled through constant pain, multiple operations and a protracted recovery, with extensive physical therapy. Today, her legs are a mass of pins and plates, but she can walk. Not fast, but she can walk.

**After almost three years of unemployment** during her recovery, Linda was ready for a new job. Her first opportunity was a part-time job at a low hourly wage. She later found a full time position, but was unable to manage the physical demands of three flights of stairs. Despite her disappointment, Linda kept on trying, and two months ago she secured employment in sales support for Daigger Scientific. It's a position that offers a competitive salary, and plenty of room for growth.

**Daigger's experience with Linda has been so positive** that the HR Division has asked her to help them find "more people like her!"

**Linda explains her inspiration to persevere** this way: "Since becoming disabled I've met amazing people, brave and cheerful in terrible circumstances more difficult than mine, and they humble me. It feels surreal to me that the DRS people who have helped me so much are giving me an award. I feel so lucky and truly blessed."

**Since her recovery, Linda has resumed her work** with the Vernon Hills Lions Club, and has become a mentor at the Center for Independent Living for Lake County, where she is running for a seat on the board.

**Randy and Linda were presented** with the Division of Rehabilitation Services Director's Personal Achievement Award as part of Illinois' celebration of October as Disability Employment Awareness Month during the Fourth Annual Employer Recognition Breakfasts.

## Keep Those Big Wheels Turning....

by Vicki Kamhi

### Imagine that you are a person with a disability who uses a wheelchair.

Now imagine that your wheelchair is broken and you can't go to work, school, the grocery store, or visit your friends or family until it is repaired. You may not even be able to get from your bedroom to your living room without help. To make matters worse, you know that you will either have to find a way to get to the closest repair clinic in a community miles away or wait for up to two weeks for a service van to come to your home. Unfortunately, that "imaginary" scenario has been all too real for individuals with disabilities living in Chicago.

**All of that changed** on October 1, 2004 with the grand opening of the "Wheelchair Doctors" Clinic at the Illinois Center for Rehabilitation & Education - Roosevelt (ICRE-R).



The first of its kind in the City of Chicago, the "Wheelchair Doctors" Clinic is a public/private partnership between ICRE-R and RehabTECH. The "Wheelchair Doctors" Clinic is a comprehensive

wheelchair service and repair center located on West Roosevelt Road. Staffed by highly skilled technicians who perform equipment and warranty repairs for all brands of manual and power wheelchairs, the clinic's services are available to ICRE-R students, Chicago Public School students, and all Chicago residents. Customers can easily access the clinic by mass transit and special transit or take advantage of the clinic's service vans that offer wheelchair repair in a more convenient location. Committed to excellent quality and customer service, the clinic works with the Illinois Department of Public Aid, Medicare, and most private insurance payers to provide complete billing service.

### For the past several years, RehabTECH

has provided services to more than 35 ICRE-R students who use wheelchairs. "Although technicians made weekly visits to the school, wheelchair repairs still remained a source of frustration for students and staff," explained Therese Manderino, ICRE-R Superintendent. "It wasn't unusual for the technicians to leave, just to have another child's chair break down the next day. The level of service needed at ICRE-R is a reflection of the previously unmet needs in the Chicago area," said Manderino.

**Vicki Kamhi is communications liaison for DRS.**



"Great discoveries and improvements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds."

Alexander Graham Bell

## One Man's Story

by Robert F. Kilbury, Rh.D.

I noticed early in the week that one of the mag spokes on my wheelchair was cracked. No big deal, although this had never happened to me before. I made a mental note to get it looked at next time I had the chance.



At an event at UIS the same week, I sat next to an old friend who mentioned, out of the blue, that he had graduated from the Illinois Children's Hospital School in 1971. As fate would have it, I was scheduled to speak at that facility, renamed Illinois Center for Rehabilitation and Education- Roosevelt, the following day for the grand opening of the Wheelchair Clinic.

Reminded about my wheelchair, I looked down and realized that a second spoke had broken all the way through, and that the use of the chair was becoming precarious at best. It was beginning to make a very strange noise when it rolled. I had that sinking feeling that only wheelchair users can fully appreciate.

During my public comments at the Center the following morning, I mentioned this set of coincidental events and how fate seemed to be smiling on me as Dave from Wheelchair Doctors had already removed a good wheel from my old chair and was set to install it on the one I was sitting in!

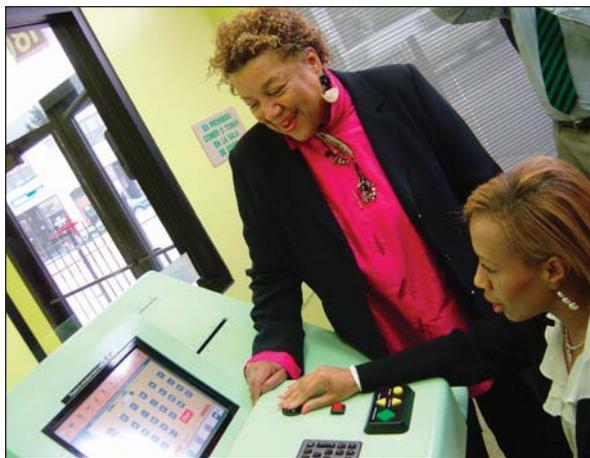
Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, several of the workers descended on my chair and performed a remarkable overhaul. I can testify that it works as well today as it did the day I got it.

Thanks again to the guys at Wheelchair Doctors for saving me. I hope they are as successful in helping other Illinois wheelchair users as they were in helping me.

*Robert F. Kilbury, Rh.D. is the director of the DHS Division of Rehabilitation Services.*

## WIC Center Kiosks Help Close Digital Divide

**Long-awaited goals to simplify and modernize** client service access shook hands with the future last month with the launching of DHS's automated self-service tellers. This new technology, called a Universal Access Kiosks (UAK) rolled out last month in 14 Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) centers throughout Chicago. The tellers operate as



*"Online, Not In Line" took another step forward with the installation of Universal Access Kiosks in 14 Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Centers throughout Chicago. The kiosks are designed to be intuitive and user friendly. They allow clients to complete intake and eligibility processes or access web-based information services using a modified keyboard, touch screen options and voicing technology in English and Spanish.*

seamlessly as "cash machines", except they dispense benefits, services, information, and for some clients, hope for the future. The purpose of the self-service tellers is to allow clients to apply for, and access services "online, rather than in line." This refreshing innovation is part of a larger plan to increase the number of ways clients can access needed benefits and services.

**While the capabilities of the kiosks** are in the early phases, clients are able to apply for benefits online, find out about their eligibility status, and access information about services. Eventually clients will, by the swipe of their link card, apply and be approved for services, have their personal information accessed from their card, and have all this sent directly to the

local offices for processing. The self-service machines will also be equipped with telephones for assistance, scanners for personal documents input, and cameras for identification and security.

**While the programs are user friendly** and the kiosks themselves are simple and intuitive, they are designed to withstand rough treatment and constant use. The modified keyboard, for example, is almost indestructible, with wider keys and resilient mechanisms made of steel and is the same model used by the U.S. Department of Defense in army tanks.

**The self-service tellers are equipped** with a simplified touch screen option keyboard, and English and Spanish voicing technology with an emphasis on accessibility for all. According to standards developed by the Trace Center at the University of Wisconsin, a nationally recognized center for testing American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and accessibility, the kiosks exceed all ADA requirements, and their design places it among the nations best. It also has an easy access pad for those with visual limitations giving them the ability to navigate computer screens and web pages using the voice synthesizing technology.

**According to Mari Franklin**, one of the lead project managers in charge of kiosk design, the tellers are easy to use, even for the computer phobic or those with limited literacy. She adds, "future phases will place high emphasis on screen interface, and improving voice technologies to ensure universal access to all constituencies in bridging the digital divide."

# Successful Solutions

## HCD Paperwork Goes High Tech

by Dianne Barghouti and Chuck Daugherty

**Why should Human Capital Development (HCD)** caseworkers use 19th Century technology to complete their job duties? What can we do to reduce the time spent and improve the accuracy? Can we make significant improvements in these areas without increases to the DHS budget?

**Chuck Daugherty**, Jackson Family Community Resource Center (FCRC) Human Services Casework Manager and Rod Rynor, HCD Region 5 System Monitor, began asking these questions eighteen months ago. Today, the answers come in a truly unique solution they call SmartForms, an example of what can be accomplished when staff chooses to "go the extra mile."

**Using best estimates**, it seems likely that caseworkers will use over 2,640,000 SmartForms in the course of their duties this year. The time saved will add up to over 35,000 hours, for a \$6 million savings in paid salary! Now, that's what you call a great idea!

The collaborative process behind these results started this way.

**"It was amazing to me** that our caseworkers were completing pre-printed paper forms with a pencil. I knew we could do better than that." said Daugherty. With the blessing of Cynthia Canning, LOA of the FCRC in Jackson, and Ayn Bartok, Co-Region 5 Administrator, they explored an idea that achieved startling results.

**The concept was to extract data from the Extra!** IPACS computer information system accessed by all HCD caseworkers and pass the data to a specialized Acrobat electronic form (e-form) on the DHS intranet. Case name and address, FCRC name and address, caseworker name and phone, date, and other participant-specific data are then displayed via the Acrobat form on the caseworker's PC. They can complete additional information as required and print and mail the form or retain the file in the case record.

**Daugherty said, "We tested the project** in the FCRC in Jackson for six months and during that time we spent many nights and weekends adding new items in response to caseworker suggestions." The time spent by Rynor and Daugherty was split between writing Extra! macro code and creating the Acrobat versions of the official DHS forms.

**The project has been rolled out statewide** to every HCD caseworker and the enthusiasm for this solution has been overwhelming. "Caseworker and FCRC administrator response has been very rewarding," said Daugherty. Some Chicago caseworkers reported that Rod and Chuck could be elected to public office as far as they're concerned.

**Many people are helping with the project.** Dale Gerrietts is getting the forms saved to the DHS intranet, Jan Freeman helps with policy issues, John Rigg and Joni Hinds provide PageMaker DHS forms masters and Sam Trigillo provides DPA forms masters.

**The project is a work in progress.**

Caseworker requests for additional E-forms continue to come in and are added as time permits. Enhancements are added as caseworker suggestions are received. The current usage rate is approximately 100 forms per month per caseworker.

**Future plans for the project are in testing now.** They include saving the completed forms in an electronic case record (ECR). "We have been working with the ScanDoc team to incorporate some of the benefits of SmartForms into their project," said Daugherty. "Combining both projects into the ECR seems natural and possible as a next step -- and -- within an accelerated schedule."

**Daugherty readily acknowledges** "I could not have done any of this without the help, knowledge, and expertise of Rod Rynor," his teammate throughout the project. Rynor professes some discomfort about being in the spotlight, and says he would rather stay in the shadows. But as Daugherty points out, "It's a little late for that, Rod."

**Dianne Barghouti, public service administrator for Human Capital Development, and Chuck Daugherty contributed to this article.**



Solutions' "Human Services Orbit" is a standing column to inform readers about DHS' latest technological blueprints and the newest "cyber initiatives."

## DHS Deploys OneNet

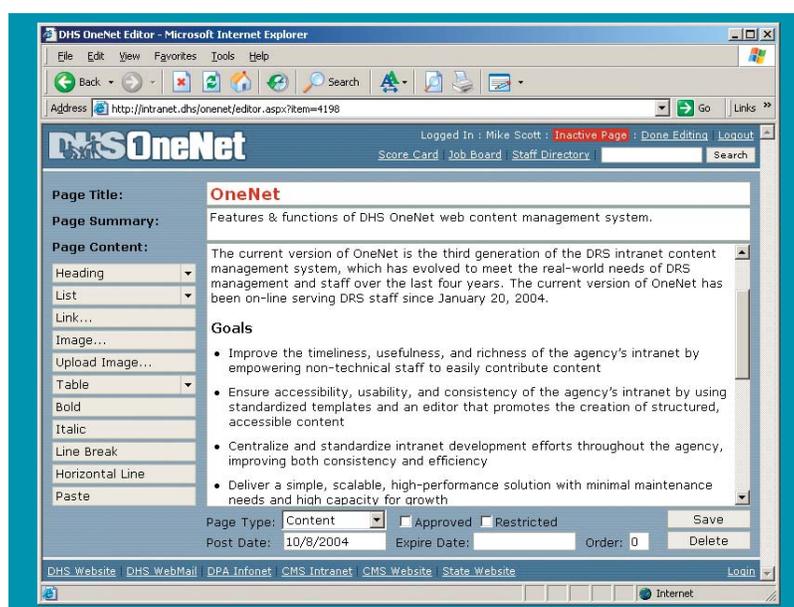
by Michael Scott

**DHS has recently developed and deployed** an innovative intranet content management system. The system, dubbed OneNet, is designed to enable staff to quickly and easily create accessible, usable web pages. With OneNet, staff use a simple, web-based editor to create and edit pages right in their web browsers. The OneNet Editor is designed to create pages according to State and Federal accessibility standards, ensuring that staff with disabilities have equal access to the entire intranet. As of today, almost one hundred "content contributors" have used it to share nearly two thousand pages with their co-workers on the DHS intranet, and we're just getting started.

**The OneNet Editor.** The heart of the OneNet system is its web-based, WYSIWYG ("what you see is what you get") editor. Using the editor, a content contributor simply logs in, browses to one of his or her pages, and clicks the "Edit Page" link. A simple editing menu appears and the entire content of the page becomes editable. When the content contributor clicks "Save", the new or updated page is instantly posted to the DHS intranet.

**The OneNet Editor looks and works** much like any word processing program. In addition to simple options such as bold and italic, the OneNet Editor also offers the ability to set section and subsection headings, insert lists with a variety of bullets or numbering, add links, and create and edit tables of data. Content contributors can even select and insert pictures from image libraries.

**Ensuring Accessibility.** As more and more staff discover the value of sharing information via the agency's intranet and website, it has become increasingly important – and increasingly difficult – to ensure that all pages are accessible to all staff, especially those who rely on large-font features,



"screen reading" software, speech recognition systems, or other assistive technologies. The OneNet Editor is specially designed to generate pages that are fully accessible, without requiring editors to have special training in accessibility techniques. OneNet enforces basic accessibility requirements, such as the inclusion of "alternate text" that screen reading programs use to describe images for people who can't see. It also follows cutting-edge accessibility standards by leaving the control of most formatting to site-wide "style sheets" that set the color, size, and style of most elements in a way that can easily be changed to meet users' individual needs.

**Michael Scott is an accessibility consultant with the Division of Rehabilitation Services.**

**“Of all the forces that make for a better world, none is so indispensable, none so powerful, as hope. Without hope people are only half alive. With hope they dream and think and work.”**

Anonymous



## Inspiration Café

### Inspiration Café Serves Up a New Start

by Stephanie Gadlin

**Homeless, poor, unemployed** and laden with feelings of helplessness, Teresa Moren needed a change.

**She remembered the lessons** taught by her father, a Pullman Porter, and her mother, who raised five children during the day and attended nursing school in the evenings to help support the family. The hard-working Morens, she says, were not a family of quitters.

**“Daddy didn’t understand failure,”** Teresa recalled, “and my mother felt that whatever went wrong in a person’s life, God would forgive you, and you could pick up and move on. It was those things that kept me going when times got tough.”

**At 16 she dropped out of high school** and wound up working in various low-paying railroad jobs. After the birth of her first son, Jovan, she obtained a GED and entered a training program to become a certified nurse’s assistant.

**For years she worked with elderly patients** at various nursing homes. With long hours and low pay, she turned to self-medication and other habits to ease the burdens of being a single mother with limited resources. Soon her responsibilities included a second son.

**“I made some bad choices** that turned into bad habits,” Moren said. “I hung out with people who were going nowhere and didn’t want me to go anywhere either. I just hit rock bottom.”

**The turning point came a year ago** when a live-in boyfriend was incarcerated and left an unemployed Moren alone to not only raise her own two children, but his two sons as well.

**“In less than a month** all of us were out on the streets,” she said, quietly. “All I was doing was trying to avoid my sons’ eyes. I couldn’t look them in the face. I was as down as any person could be.”

**Despondent and alone,** Moren says she and her son, now 15, walked a mile and a half to a Chicago Police station where they promptly called human services to escort her to a transition shelter. The pair was later admitted to Sylvia Center Shelter on Chicago’s North Side.

**“I was in the shelter for seven months** and not a day went by in which I didn’t see myself as a failure,” she recalled, “but I didn’t want to stay one.” Broken, the Chicago native said she pulled on things her parents had told her as a child to regain her self-confidence. Alcohol- and drug-free, she searched for job openings and training opportunities.

**Eventually her persistence paid off**—the Heartland Institute was recruiting participants to a unique training program that turned ordinary people into extraordinary chefs. There she found respect, encouragement and friendship.

**Moren entered Inspiration Corporation’s three-month program** and for five days a week learned everything from food preparation and presentation, to ordering bulk supplies, working with wait staff and culinary art skills. At the end of the extensive program, she was offered a job at its restaurant.

**Moren graduated with honors** August 6th, with both sons in attendance, beaming with pride as she accepted her diploma of completion.

**“I felt like all of it was a dream,”** she said, tears welling in her eyes. “After being so low in life, here I was, standing before my children, being somebody. I was doing something. I could lift my head up and know that tomorrow was gonna be okay.”

**Today she is kitchen coordinator** for the award-winning Inspiration Café, a dynamic restaurant in Chicago’s Uptown neighborhood. In addition to overseeing a crew of 15 workers, she starts her day at



Teresa Moren

7 a.m. and supervises all aspects of menu selection and food preparation. Her job allowed her to take advantage of rent subsidies and she and her son now live in a comfortable apartment.

**“I’m going to open up my own restaurant** someday,” she said, looking out a window onto a bustling North Side street. “All I needed was a helping hand, a few resources and the will to succeed. Failure was not an option.”

**Stephanie Gadlin is one of the DHS communications managers at the Illinois Office for Communication and Information.**

DHS funds support a partnership between Heartland Human Care Services and the Inspiration Café.

*solutions*

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## I Have a Job I Love!

**My name is Michelle Heral.** I have Cerebral Palsy and mild mental retardation. I have been married to my husband Ken for four years. We are the Springfield representatives for People First and have been active in the voter registration drive. I like to go shopping and to spend time with friends and family. I also like to give my co-workers a hard time... so watch out Rich!

**I have worked** for the Division of Developmental Disabilities since 1992. One of my biggest goals was



*Michelle Heral (left) and job coach Jill Bombstad review her new computer tasks.*

to be a full time employee at DHS. After 12 long years my dream came true in April, 2004. A thousand thanks to Dr. Maryam Mostoufi for making my dream a reality and to Director Jeri Johnson for approving it. It is longer hours but the paychecks are fabulous!

**My job title is Clerical Trainee.** I do a lot of different things—filing, copying, sorting, labeling envelopes for mass mailings, envelope stuffing,

shredding, faxing, assembling manuals and emptying recycle bins. I have some new tasks since becoming an official state employee—answering the phones and taking messages, creating and printing labels plus I have even created an office itinerary.

**I'm lucky because I have a job I love.** It has given me a whole new outlook and proved that I can accomplish things. It has made me more responsible. I have something to look forward to every day because I know I am important.



**I have had some hurdles** that I have had to jump over. The bathrooms did not have a handicap accessible stall with handrails. My supervisors Sandy Bancroft and Jill Cave made lots of calls. After a ton of work they got handrails installed for me. The second big hurdle was my uncomfortable chair. Sandy and Jill got on the phone again; we went through the process of ordering a new chair that accommodates my needs. And then there's my computer—I was so excited to get it, but I didn't even know how to type! Sandy bought me a typing CD. My Job Coach through Springfield Association for Retarded Citizens (SPARC) Supported Employment, and I made picture instructions on all the tasks I do on the computer. It makes my job easier because looking at the pictures helps guide me.

**I think more employers should hire people with disabilities.** We need jobs too! We are hard workers and are dedicated. Having a job at DHS has been an important part of my life. I wish more people could have the wonderful opportunity that I have.

**Michelle Heral is a clerical trainee in the Human Resources Development Section of the Division of Developmental Disabilities.**

**“You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working...”**

**Anatole France**

## **North Side Teens Tell the “Wicked Truth”**

*This a pilot project of the Getting Results Achieving Dreams and Success (GRADS) initiative, took teens from computer novices to web designers in six short weeks.*

**If you boot up your computer and go** to [www.wickedtruth.com](http://www.wickedtruth.com), the website you’ll see is the product of an intensive six-week summer course for teens in web design, funded by a grant from the GRADS initiative. The project is the brainchild of Alternatives, a youth services agency on Chicago’s north side.

**The GRADS program focuses resources** on activities intended to encourage teens to remain in school and get their degrees – while providing skills that enhance their ability to manage the demands of a high school curriculum.

**Last summer at Alternatives**, fifteen teens spent six weeks learning the art and craft of web design. Chad Williams, Tech Center coordinator, believes in the value of applied learning. He took this group of young people through a rigorous curriculum, intended to teach them how to create a web site, and a great deal more.

**The first order of business was to transform** fifteen strangers into a team with a shared purpose. Long before they began their work on the computers (purchased and networked with GRADS funding) they spent time in community building and trust exercises, becoming the Community Web Team. That phase was followed by extensive study of issues that confront teens and then brainstorming about their site – what they should say, how it should look and how they would take it from and idea to a reality.

**The theme they chose is “Our World,”** and the issues the site explores are ones common to their neighborhood: poverty (homelessness), violence (gangs and police brutality) and teen pregnancy. They created surveys that covered these issues, and went out in the community to interview organizations about the problems and solutions.

**Williams describes one** of the interview techniques – stepping out in the street to flag down patrol cars and interview the police as “a bit of a role reversal – usually the flagging happens the other way around.” Once the survey results were collated, it was design time.

**Working in an integrated development environment**, the Web Team constructed a site, which opens with an animated segment, and then takes you into the home page. There you find the data collection survey, the tabulated results, the readings and websites they used for research, links to each area of focus and a “poetry corner,” with verse from the Web Team, all set to music.

**The Web Team liked the experience** so much that they are re-grouping to update the site.

**One of the team, Allison Jackson, has been hired** by Alternatives to act as webmaster and run the Tech Center on Saturdays. She described the GRADS website as a good experience: “I liked the team building and collaboration, and I learned a lot – we used research, writing, photojournalism, and math to build our site.”



## Cooking With Class

by Vicki Kamhi

**Imagine this** – you are on stage before an audience, preparing a dish of your own invention, with judges observing everything you do as you slice, chop, blend, and puree ingredients, all the while explaining what you're doing and answering questions – all of which has to be translated by your interpreter. It's a feat worthy of Emeril on his best day!

**Well, the Illinois School for the Deaf's (ISD) Junior Chef Team did just that** – and were named the Grand Champion Winner of the Navy Pier Iron Chef Cooking Competition held in Chicago on October 23, 2004. Eighth grade team members



Amanda Kelly, Nikki Wilson, and Jessica Willoughby, (pictured above), took the top honors with their original "Fruit Breeze Bowl" recipe.

**"Participating in the Junior Chef Challenge Competition** was a wonderful learning experience for the students," said Debbie Radliff, ISD Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher who accompanied the team to the Chicago competition. "Their cooking performance in front of the judges and crowd surpassed my expectations. We really enjoyed the entire experience."

**To enter the competition,** the girls had to submit an original recipe, with an analysis of its nutritional content. Their recipe placed them among the four finalist teams, so they traveled to Chicago to participate in the final cook-off. On stage, for an audience and a judges' panel with two professional chefs and a nutritionist, they chopped and blended ingredients for their creation, while fielding questions from the judges. Debbie Radliff provided interpretation services.

**After the judges evaluated all four dishes** for nutrition, taste, texture, and visual appeal, adding bonus points for showmanship, the ISD's Fruit Breeze Bowl was declared the winner!

### Describing their Fruit Bowl Breeze recipe,

Jessica explained "Our idea was a fruit smoothie poured over fruit pieces and placed in a grapefruit bowl."

Amanda offered her evaluation of their performance: "I

think we won the Junior Chef Challenge because of our cutting skills, posters, matching fruit dishes, and our smiles!" For Nikki, the Junior Chef Challenge was a great learning experience: "We learned that we need to be creative, practice a lot, have fun, and be prepared to accept if we won or lost."

**The team won a plaque,** medals, a set of cookware for their classroom, and tickets to a Blackhawks Hockey game, the Shedd Aquarium, and the zoo.

**Vicki Kamhi is communications liaison for DRS.**

### Fruit Bowl Breeze

Ingredients:

Bowls:

2 grapefruits

Sauce:

1/4 cup sugar

1 tsp. vanilla

1/2 cup milk

1 cup grapes

2 peaches

1 cup watermelon

2 bananas

1/4 cup maraschino cherries

1 orange (peeled)

Salad:

2 apples

2 kiwi

1 cup pineapple chunks

1 cup strawberries

1 cup blueberries

1. Cut 2 grapefruits in half. Remove the fruit and save the peeling for the serving bowls.
2. Cut grapes, peaches, watermelon, bananas, maraschino cherries, and orange into small pieces without seeds. Place into a blender with sugar, vanilla and milk. Blend until it makes a smooth sauce.
3. Cut apples, kiwi, pineapple, strawberries, and blueberries into bite size pieces. Place in a large mixing bowl.
4. Pour sauce over the fruit and mix lightly. Spoon fruit into the grapefruit bowls to serve.
5. Serve immediately.
6. Yields 4-6 servings

**"The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned."**

**Maya Angelou**

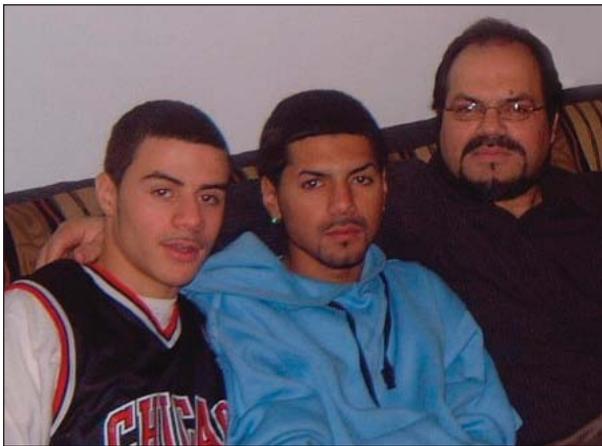
## Having A Home of One's Own

by **Martha Younger-White**

*The Illinois Homeownership Coalition for People with Disabilities is a project of the Statewide Independent Living Council.*

**While home ownership has always been** a part of the American dream, most people with disabilities have never had the opportunity to turn that dream into reality. In Illinois, less than 10 percent of individuals with disabilities own their own home, compared to a 60 percent home ownership rate overall.

**However, the Home Ownership Coalition for People With Disabilities** is working to change those numbers in a significant way. The project started with funds from the DHS Real Choice Systems



*Juan Jose Ortiz claims that "living in our current house with my three beautiful sons is one of my greatest accomplishments as a single parent."*

Change Federal Grant. The program's success has made it a model for other states

**One of the biggest barriers** to home ownership among people with disabilities is relatively low household income, which makes it difficult to accumulate cash for a down payment, closing costs, and modifications to make the home accessible. Three Illinois programs work to eliminate these social and architectural barriers:

- The Homeownership Coalition (with 21 member organizations statewide) provides an innovative program of wraparound services and financial assistance to allow people with disabilities to buy and maintain a home of their own. To date, 35 families have become homeowners, and 68 more are pursuing home purchases through the program.
- The Division of Rehabilitation Services helps record numbers of persons with disabilities find quality employment, easing the financial crunch. Last year, DRS assisted 8,882 individuals secure competitive employment.



*Solomon, a Vietnam vet, relocated from St. Louis to Taylorville, and, with the help of the Homeownership Coalition, was able to purchase and modify his home.*

- Illinois also supports the TechConnect low interest loan program, which secures financing on favorable terms for home modifications to ensure accessibility, and support greater independence.

**The Coalition's pilot program** covered Sangamon, Macoupin, Montgomery, Menard, Logan and Christian counties, but its goal is to replicate the program statewide.

**Community Service Options (CSO)**, based in Chicago, runs the Home Options program, which



*Myrna's dream of homeownership became a reality after 18 months of participation in Habitat for Humanity's program. In September, 2003, she moved into her new home with Sunshine, her service dog and Tybalt, her cat.*

has used funding from the Systems Change Grant to expand and improve their services, and has helped 31 customers become homeowners.

**Martha Younger-White is bureau chief of Accessibility and Safety Systems.**

# On Another Note



**DHS hosted "Ticket to Independence,"** a one-day conference and exhibit at the James R. Thompson Center to mark the 14th anniversary of the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act.



**DHS recently acknowledged several employers** during the Division of Rehabilitation Services' Annual Employer Breakfast Awards ceremony held in Chicago and Springfield.

**The theme for this year's entry in the Chicago Defender's annual back-to-school Bud Billiken Parade** was "Promoting Teen REACH: The Key To Our Future."



## Chinatown Link

DHS, along with the United States Department of Agriculture, Chinatown Chamber of Commerce and local service organizations, recently conducted a Chinatown Food Stamp Outreach Campaign.



## Englewood Unity Day

Hundreds of Chicago's west side residents gathered this summer at Good Hope Baptist Church to participate in DHS' Unity Day Celebration.



## Fit to Lead

This past summer, DHS kicked off it's official agency-wide Fit to Lead Campaign: DHS Leading The Way To Better Health, with a series of health and nutrition activities.



## Korean Visit

Pictured (left to right) are Jwakyum Regina Kim, DHS Secretary Carol L. Adams, Ph.D., Chief of the Bureau of Child and Adolescent Health Denise Simon, and Haelim Baeg. Both students visited from South Korea to learn more about the agency's teen pregnancy prevention programming.



**“Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”**

**Theodore Roosevelt**

**As part of DHS’ ongoing commitment to diversity**, staff were encouraged to organize and participate in various ethnic activities throughout the year. During the months of September and October, staff from DHS displayed their Cuban, Mexican and Puerto Rican pride during Hispanic Heritage Month.



**ICED Award** Audrey McCrimon, assistant to the secretary for Compliance, Access and Workplace Safety, is pictured with Alvin Roberts (center) and Rob Kilbury, director of DHS’ Division of Rehabilitation Services. Mr. Roberts, a 50-year employee of the Division of Rehabilitation Services, was recognized as State Employee of the Year during the Illinois Commission on Employees with Disabilities’ annual ceremony.



**Parents and students recently attended**

Woodlawn’s annual Small Scholarship Awards ceremony in partnership with Apostolic Church of God Bishop Arthur Brazier. Pictured is

Evangelist Nettie Ratcliff distributing a check to one elementary grade student and his mother.



**Chicago Marathoners**

Kudos go out to seven DHS staffers who participated in the 26-mile, 2004 Chicago Marathon on October 17. They include:

Reva Bauch and Carl Fritz, attorneys in DHS’ General Counsel’s Office; Victoria Nodal, Human Capital Development; and (pictured clockwise from above left) Elsie Darlene Morgan, Bureau of Employment and Training and Jo Ann Thompson, Division of Human Capital Development; Mary Castle-Enyard, Division of Community Health and Prevention; and Sylvia Riperton-Lewis, Special Assistant to the Inspector General.



**Journalism students from South Shore High School** in Chicago pose with “Principal for a Day” Adams after they interview her for “Continuance”, a magazine published by SIU, Carbondale.

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