

Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living

Volume 1, Issue 1

November 2011

Inside this issue:

Time for Wellness	3
The Power of Membership	3
Leah Gray Steps	4
A New Look for the Internet Café	5
Welcome back Mike Matthews	5
Proud Home of the ATRC	6

The Vision Renewed

The Vision is the revitalized newsletter for Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living. It represents the voices of the staff and members of the organization, and it sheds light on upcoming special events and a record on past ones. We look forward to providing a new Vision every other

month so that readers can stay in tune with what is happening in this community. If you would like to take part in the reporting or be part of the creation process we welcome your support and encourage you to take an active role with us. Thank you for reading The Vision.

New Leadership For Patriots

By Madonna Long

TRIPIL is proud to welcome Kim Gibson as the Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living's new Executive Director. Kim grew up in Idaho and moved to Wyoming to go to college. She has a son who she adores as well as a puppy who brings her

much joy. She has a bachelor's degree in Social work and has worked with individuals with disabilities since 1988. She also has personal experience with disabilities.

(Continued on page 2)



Kim Gibson Brings Patriots New Leadership

(Continued from page 1)

Kim was introduced to the Independent Living Philosophy when she worked for a nursing home where she met an IL Specialist who came to talk to residents.

The IL philosophy intrigued her as she thought it was an incredible movement for individuals who have a disability to live in their communities independently, and after learning the IL philosophy she was hooked.

Prior to coming to TRIPIL, Kim was the Executive Director at an Independent Living Center in Wyoming serving the Western side of the state. She had a major role in local, regional, state and national efforts involving individuals with disabilities. She was nominated for the Mayor's Leadership Award in Wyoming regarding disabilities, has presented at several conferences on topics related to individuals with

disabilities as well as serving on several boards including the Wyoming Governor's Family Advisory Council appointed by the Governor for eight years and elected as secretary, Wyoming SILC, Co-chairman of the Red Feathered Advisory Board, Rocky Mountain Region 8 DBTAC Leadership network and currently on the APRIL Board as an the elected Secretary as well as subcommittees for NCIL. She was elected as a Precinct committee woman in 2008 for Sweetwater County in Wyoming for one term.

IL philosophy intrigued her as she thought it was an incredible movement for individuals who have a disability to live in their communities independently

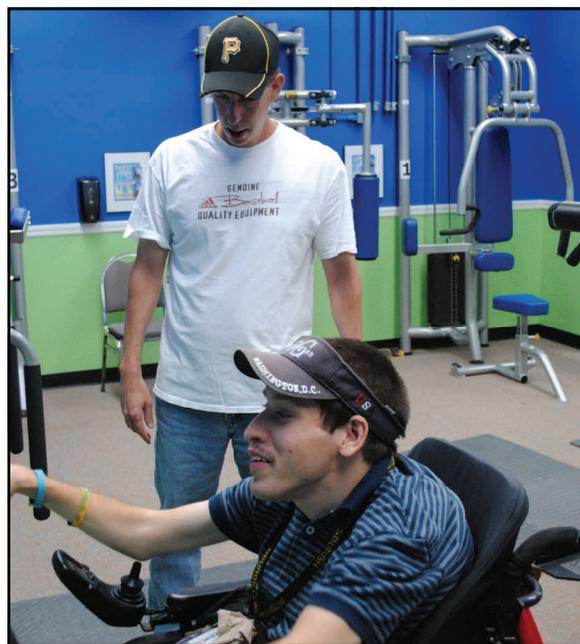
Kim enjoys the concept of the advocacy that the independent living movement provides people who have disabilities. She is looking forward to working with the TRIPIL Staff and the community. Please welcome Kim Gibson to our staff.

TIME FOR WELLNESS

By Ray Pittman

As the weather gets colder and the days get shorter, many people become less active. We at TRIPIL want to change that, and provide a way for people to get more active and begin or maintain wellness. TRIPIL has a fully accessible gym to be used by our members and staff. TRIPIL provides a personal trainer, so everyone can receive their own exercise prescription, based on their needs, goals, and abilities. The gym is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 4:30, times are subject to change to help meet our members needs. Starting on

November 3rd the wellness program will be presenting "Reach for the Sky" which will take place at TRIPIL's Washington office, every Thursday from 4:00 to 4:30, with a focus on stretching and relaxation techniques. To make an appointment for a wellness consultation call (724)-223-5115 and ask for Ray.



The Power of Membership

Membership is a key to having an empowered role in TRIPIL and to ensure an active and flourishing organization. It connects us to the community and grants us power to take an active role in how TRIPIL is run. Every member has a vote in the major decisions of the corporation and elects every board member from their very own ranks. Membership also gives you access to numerous events including two membership meetings, weekly wellness activities, and multiple social

gatherings throughout the year. So thank you for choosing to become involved with us, we have a lot to do and with your help we can see to it that we grow together towards a free and independent future.

Leah Gray Steps Up to the Plate as an IL Supervisor

By Madonna Long

TRIPIL welcomes Leah Gray as the new Independent Living Specialist Supervisor. Leah graduated from Edinboro University with a BS Degree in Business Administration/Accounting. While at Edinboro, she was very active in sports where she often competed locally and nationally in track, field, swimming, weightlifting, and road racing-including 9 marathons.

Leah acquired her MBA with a concentration in Sports Management from Robert Morris University. Briefly she lived in Atlanta, GA where she graduated with an internship for Disabled Sports USA (DSUSA). Leah was then hired by the Atlanta Paralympic Organizing Committee (APOC) to work in transportation for the 1996 Paralympic Games.

Leah began her career in independent living as a subcontractor for PCIL and then worked for TRCIL as the Director of Community Relations. Leah then took a position as a Development Director for LifeSpan, Inc., where she helped raise funds for their capital campaign. Leah's prior job before joining the TRIPIL Team was at Harmarville Outreach Programs



and Educational (HOPE) Network where she worked to help develop all of the health sports activities including a fitness/wellness program.

Leah, helped found the Steel City Starz, Pennsylvania's only all women's wheelchair basketball team and one of only 14 in the US. Leah was also selected as one of Southwestern PA's Outstanding Women in Sports by the Women & Girls Foundation and she is the President of the Women's Division of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA), as well as curling and wheelchair softball.

Leah is currently residing in Mount Pleasant, PA with Peyton, her 13 year-old daughter, and Donovan, her 8 year-old son, and her 3 dogs- Athena, Max, and Bentley. TRIPIL welcomes Leah and her enthusiasm to our staff.

A New Look for the Internet Café

By Ed Pahula

Over the last few months the Internet Café in Washington has had many changes. These changes include new chairs, new and updated computers, and a new Café Manager, Ed Pahula, just for starters. The café' got 3 new computers giving us a total of 10. Windows 7 and other software has been installed to help the computers run better, play videos, share photos, open and save files, use different types of websites and different electronic devices. We have different keyboards, mice, and programs to make

the computer accessible to all. Come by and see for yourself. If you have any questions call (724) 223 5115 and ask for Ed, he would be glad to help.



Welcome back Mike Matthews

By Mike Matthews

Hello Again! Let me re-introduce myself. Formerly, I have worked at TRIPIL as a civil rights specialist and independent living supervisor. On October 17, 2011, I started on a new and exciting journey as the independent living specialist for children, youth, and transition age.

If you know me, then you know that children and young adults with disabilities are near to my heart. It's my goal to take what TRIPIL has taught me and pay it forward to the next generation of advocates in our disability community. Get ready for an exciting youth program in 2012!

Proud Home of the ATRC

By Catherine Holland

TRIPIL Patriots is just one of a few Assistive Technology Resource Centers (ATRC) in the State of Pennsylvania. Under the umbrella of the Pennsylvania Initiative of Assistive Technology (PIAT), the ATRC has essentially one mission. That purpose is to get assistive technology into the hands of people with disabilities. This is an important goal, as assistive technology is the bridge of opportunity for people with disabilities. From the low tech grabber to the high tech laser mouse, there is a full array of devices and equipment which bring freedom to people with disabilities.

We are charged to cover our core counties of Washington, Greene, and Fayette along with outlying counties of Cambria, Somerset, Bedford, and Blair. This is a large territory and the need is great. Recently, Catherine Holland became the primary person in TRIPIL Patriots to handle the assistive technology program. Catherine says "I could not be happier than to have responsibility for technology. It is a great opportunity for me to learn as well as to put some creative energy behind the program to help it grow."



 **Institute on Disabilities**
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY®

College of Education



Technology changes as quickly as in a day. With the advent of the I-PAD and smart phones such as the Droid, manufacturers are becoming more customer oriented with features which allow for many touch and control options. We will continue to monitor these many advances and keep people informed as they seek to make their homes, work, and recreational opportunities more accessible and enjoyable.

Visit us at
www.tripil.com

TRIPIL Calendar of Events

Event	Summary	Date and Time
Wellness Monday at the Uniontown Office	Come Join us in Uniontown on alternating Mondays for Wii Bowling and other games.	11/7, 11/21, 12/5, 12/19 1:00pm to 4:00pm
Internet Café Trainings	Hint's and tricks to make computers work for you, call in for Training Schedule.	11/9, 11/16, 11/30, 12/7, 12/14 10:00am to 12:00pm
Manual and Power Wheelchair Demonstration	TRIPIL will host a demonstration of manual and power wheelchairs featuring functionality and technology.	11/15 2:00pm to 4:00pm
Wellness Wednesdays in Washington	Come Join us in the Washington office on alternating Mondays for Wii Bowling and other games	11/9, 11/16, 11/23, 11/30, 12/7, 12/14 1:00pm to 4:30pm
Arts & Crafts Class	TRIPIL will be starting Arts and Crafts Classes that will be taught by our own community members	11/16, 11/21, 11/23, 11/28, 11/30 10:00am to 12:00pm
Thanksgiving	Offices closed for the Holiday	11/24, 11/25
Basic Acoustics and Electronics	FREE webinars from Hearing Loss Association of America	12/8 7:00pm to 8:00pm
Advisory Committee	Community led group working to make TRIPIL better for people like you	12/1 11:00am to 1:00pm
Annual Holiday Party	Holiday party for the members and community of Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living	12/8 11:30am to 3:30

TRIPIL
69 East Beau Street
Washington, PA 15301

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
WASHINGTON, PA
PERMIT NO. 128

**Tri-County Patriots for Independent Living affirms
Liberty and Justice for all people with disabilities.**

Our Mission:



The Vision