Who doesn’t like a party or a picnic? We, at PCIL, love an excuse to kick back and have a good time with good food and good company. That’s exactly what we did to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the passing of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

PCIL’s combined ADA celebration and annual picnic was a huge success and attended by about 80 people. The traditional fare of hot dogs and hamburgers, sides and desserts were served, with the grilling by Fred & Pete’s of Hamilton. Fred & Pete’s is a staple feature of the annual picnic and never disappoints. The traditional lawn games of Nerf football, Frisbee and water-balloon toss were managed by our own Matt Daly.

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Hats Off to Our Interns
By Renee Pfaff

PCIL had the pleasure this summer in hosting two interns who were both searching for more experience in the human services field. Garima Srivstava, a student at Mercer County Community College, assisted staff during our Campership Fund program and also played a vital role in the pilot program conducted this summer for individuals trying to pass the DMV knowledge test. She also was a great help in the coordination of recreation events.

Shirley Panjabi, a recent graduate from William Paterson University, provided in-depth assistance for our Support Coordination staff. She focused on formulating a list of all qualified vendors of DDD so the support staff had easy access.

PCIL Summer Interns Garima Srivastava (Left) and Shirley Panjabi (Right).

Through an Intern’s Eyes
By Shirley Panjabi

I have been an intern at the Progressive Center for Independent Living since June of this year and my experience has been a pleasant one. I have been involved in working with the support coordinators that work in conjunction with DDD to provide necessary services to individuals with disabilities. Having graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Psychology, I was in search of an organization or center that would provide me with opportunities to explore my interests in the field and put the variety of skills that I have acquired to use. The Progressive Center for Independent Living has given me that experience by allowing me to be involved in a variety of tasks that surround support coordination, I have learned that there is a lot of work that goes into getting services for an individual that is in need. These experiences provided me with more insight and sensitivity when dealing with individuals with disabilities.
My Experience With Access Link
By Jocelyn DiLorenzo

My first time riding Access Link was when I was eighteen years old when I was a Senior in Steinert High School in 2001. My first access link driver was very nice and he took me to the library because I was volunteering there. He also took me to Robert Wood Johnson Hospital, PCIL, Hamilton Lanes, Colonial Lanes, AMC of Mercer and Allies Inc.

Access Link is very comfortable when riding. I find using Access Link gives me more independence and freedom to do what I need to do during the week. It allows me to go to all of my programs and also social events. All I need to do is call on the telephone to schedule my ride if I need to. It only costs me $1.35 per ride which is very affordable. I would recommend anyone with a handicap/disability to try Access Link. It is my go to for all my transportation needs and again, I feel very independent and confident.

Access Link is a service for those individuals who are not able to utilize the regular-fixed route bus system through New Jersey Transit. Access Link provides curb to curb assistance for senior citizens and people with disabilities. For more information about Access Link, call 1-800-955-2321 or visit their website at www.njtransit.com.

IMPORTANT 2015 CAMPERSHIP UPDATE
By Chelsea Martin

Please have attendance records from camper’s program & receipt of payment in to Chelsea Martin no later than September 15, 2015. If the camp will be directly reimbursed Chelsea will need attendance records and outstanding balance statement on camp letterhead, no later than September 15, 2015.

Please remember that it is the parent or guardian’s responsibility to obtain accurate documentation. Payment will not be rendered to camp or family unless appropriate documents have been processed by PCIL.

Thanks so much for everyone’s participation in the 2015 Campership Program. PCIL hopes every camper had a great experience.
Recentely we had an influx of calls from students who were seeking help in passing their written driver’s exam. Most of these students stated that their attempt at the test while in Driver’s Ed in high school proved unsuccessful and their school only provided them with one go at it. Because we received several calls for assistance, PCIL decided to run a group to help these students and young adults. During the month of July, six individuals met at the center twice a week with PCIL staff and our summer intern, Garima Srivastava. The focus for PCIL was to provide the information in a variety of ways to incorporate all learning styles. Each class provided an assortment of activities to help capture important information from the book. Information was delivered through the traditional way using the manual along with integrating videos, class discussions, games, pre and post tests and reviews. Students also learned about taming anxiety levels during test taking and valuable study skills strategies.

PCIL is aware that this is a needed service for many individuals struggling with their written exam. We are currently looking for funding to continue this group for those that can benefit from this extra support. If you are interested in this group, please call the office at 609-581-4500 and ask to be placed on the waiting list.

**Giving Some Extra Help For The Written Driver’s Exam**
*By Renee Pfaff*

**Happiness Is...**
*By Suzanne Peins*

What is Happiness? Happiness is thought of as the good life, freedom from suffering, flourishing, well-being, joy, prosperity and pleasure. Of course we can’t be happy all of the time, but achieving and working on life goals can make us happy, and achieving our goals builds confidence to go on and work to achieve more goals.

As an Independent Living Specialist working for PCIL, part of my job is to assist our consumers with achieving their life goals. Goals such as finding housing, transportation, looking for employment, writing a resume, finding a support group, budgeting money or applying for benefits.

If you would like my assistance in achieving your goals, or figuring out what would make you happier and more independent, call or email me at PCIL to make an appointment. My contact information is (609) 581-4500, ext. 112 or Suzanne.Peins@pcil.org. Go to our website to find out what PCIL can do for you.
Recreation Update

By Chelsea Martin

Progressive Center for Independent Living & Community Connections had a fun-filled summer so far with more to come. We started off the summer with bowling on May 20th; this was one of the most successful bowling events PCIL has ever organized. John Witman, PCIL’s vice-president was in attendance and bowled along with our consumers.

On June 15th former Career Gateway students got together and went to St. Gregory’s Carnival. St. Greg’s donated food tickets to PCIL, everyone who attended got to enjoy some tasty carnival food. We spent the night eating, laughing, and riding some cool rides.

On June 29th PCIL attended an baseball event at Trenton Thunder. Over 35 people enjoyed the buffet and game. Mike Sasor caught two fly balls and was gracious enough to give one to his sister Kelly.

July 27th was a special occasion for PCIL. PCIL teamed up with Mercer County Office on Disabilities and celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Over 70 people came out to support us, along with local congress, including a Senator, Freeholders and our County Executive.

Stay up to date on all events by liking us on Facebook. Search: Progressive Center for Independent Living NJ

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Are You a PCIL Member?

A PCIL membership has many benefits that can be enjoyed throughout the year. Join now and enjoy your benefits until the end of 2015. Members receive reduced rates on recreational events and are invited to a Members Only Dinner.

Individual --- $15.00
Couple -- $25.00
Family (Up to 5 living at same address) --- $40.00
Organization --- $100.00
FUN WITH THE RECREATION PROGRAM!

BOWLING

Everyone had a blast this summer bowling with PCIL on May 20, 2015.
CARNIVAL

Friends of PCIL had a great time together at the Carnival on June 15, 2015.

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Recreation Photos
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BASEBALL

This summer PCIL went to several baseball games, including Trenton Thunder!
PCIL’s Annual Picnic a Huge Success
Continued from Front Page

We did have some fun new additions to the activities this year. A friend of the agency, Barbara Haas, was drawing caricatures of anyone who wanted one. One of our interns this summer, Garima Srivastiva, was hard at work offering individuals Henna tattoos. These are temporary tattoos that are popular in Indian culture and just fun to get in the summer or anytime. Additionally a magician was walking around entertaining people at their tables. He was especially popular with the younger crowd! Finally, the ever popular pontoon boat was offering rides to all. This is a very popular part of the annual picnic and is accessible to individuals who use wheelchairs.

Along with all of PCIL staff participating in the fun, we also had members of the Mercer County Office for the Disabled and Mercer County Trade. Furthermore, Assemblymen Dan Benson, Senator Linda Greenstein, Freeholder Andrew Koontz and County Executive Brian Hughes all shared thoughts on the ADA and how it has impacted the lives of their constituents. A huge highlight of the day was when the unexpected guest of Assemblywoman Elizabeth Muoio arrived to present the Progressive Center with a proclamation from Jennifer McQuaid and Dana Burley. We as an agency were so honored to have so many great people joining us for such an exciting occasion.

The picnic was a huge success and we thank all who attended and came out for the fun day of eating, playing and celebrating!
Attention school staff, parents and youth; Do you know a high school student that can benefit from the following?

- Understanding expectations after high school
- Identifying careers related to their interests, strengths and abilities
- Identifying lifestyle preferences as they relate to school, career/employment and inclusive community living
- Determine eligibility for pre-employment services from DVRS prior to graduation
- Explore needed adult services and supports

The Progressive Center for Independent Living, (PCIL) offers a unique program called It’s All About Work that can make an impact in a high school student’s life and increase their chances for employment success upon graduation. The program offers two specific courses that can assist students ages 14 to 21 in planning for their adult life as it relates to the requirements of IDEA 2004 and NJAC 6A:14. Coursework is aligned with the Common Core State Standards related to college and career readiness. Participation in It’s All About Work adds a whole new dimension for high school students in that they not only cover material in our class sessions that will benefit them as they prepare for graduation, but we can potentially link them to pre-employment services, if they are eligible, with NJ Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJDVRS) prior to graduation if they are 16 years of age or older and have completed one of our courses. Want to learn more about It’s All About Work? Call us at 609-581-4500 in Mercer and 908-782-1055 in Hunterdon.

A La Carte Services Offered Through PCIL

PCIL has an exciting service to assist individuals with disabilities in identifying ways to improve career opportunities and find permanent, integrated and competitive employment. Our a La Carte service is connected primarily with career selection, job search and adjustment to work. These services are available through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). Talk with your DVRS counselor or PCIL if you want to know more about the services listed below.

Orientation to Employment:
1. Pre-Employment Instructional Support
2. Rights and Responsibilities of the Employee and the Employer: Title I of the ADA
3. Post-Secondary Job Training Resources
4. Social Skills: Keys to Obtaining & Retaining Jobs and Enriching Quality of Adult Life
5. Working Well with a Disability
6. Budgeting and Banking
A La Carte Services Offered Through PCIL

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Career Development and Work Readiness Planning
1. Employment Readiness Instructional Support
2. Navigating Governmental Resources for Training, Work and Funding
3. Community Based Work Experience
4. Steps in Vocational Planning

Transition to Employment
1. Fiscal Stewardship: Understanding Employee Benefits, Fiscal Compensation
2. Assistive Technology: Tools to Independence and Employment
3. Community Based Work Experience
4. Steps in Vocational Planning

Post Placement Support Needs
1. Job Club
2. How to Maintain Employment
3. Time Management and Organization in the Workplace
4. Conflict Resolution in the Workplace

DDD Supports Program
By Matthew Daly

This July, the Department of Developmental Disabilities unveiled the Supports Program. This program provides supports to individuals with developmental disabilities over the age of 21. For individuals with developmental disabilities, this program can improve the quality of life for those involved in the program. The participant and their family will be able to choose from a variety of services, including:

- Assistive Technology Services
  - Can provide funds for an assistive technology assessment and purchasing equipment
- Community Based Supports
  - Support staff can be provided to help develop independent living skills and participate in community activities
- Day Habilitation
  - Provide day services that focus on community activities, skill development, and encouraging personal interests
- Prevocational Training
  - Focuses on career exploration and developing work skills
- Supported Employment
  - Focuses on job supports like job coaching and travel training

In order to qualify for the program, there are a few requirements that must be fulfilled. For more information about how to become a part of this program and how you or your child could benefit, please call the Progressive Center.
Advertise With Us!

Place your business ad in our newsletter. We have a mailing list of over 1,100 households within Mercer and Hunterdon counties.

Call us for more details and rates. 609-581-4500

Progressive Center and Support Coordination
A Great Fit!

Please contact our Mercer or Hunterdon Offices for more information or to schedule a visit.

Mercer
3525 Quakerbridge Rd.,
Suite 904
Hamilton, NJ
609-581-4500

Hunterdon
4 Walter E. Foran Blvd.,
Suite 410
Flemington, NJ
908-782-1055

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