



Illinois Inroads to Inclusion

By Lois Barnhart, Illinois Disability Outreach Coordinator

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NW Region Inclusion Team Mission Statement :

To promote and support full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of National and local community service organizations.

The NW Region Inclusion Team continues monthly meetings. Meetings will begin to be held at Kreider Services in Dixon Illinois, with video conferencing provided by SIU Telehealth. Two new members have been added to the team since September. We welcome representation from the Rockford Center for Sight and Hearing and IL Dept. of Emp. Security, Veterans Employment Representative. The team will continue to expand aiming toward inclusive representation of people of all abilities.

The Inclusion Team assisted in the preparation of the Disability Grant Narrative and goals for 2011. A Strategic Plan of Action has been developed by the team to measure progress toward our goals. We are currently formulating a Resource/Inclusion Toolkit for agencies in the NW Region. An anonymous survey has been developed by the NWRIT in conjunction with the Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois. The focus of the survey is to identify what roadblocks people with disabilities have encountered in accessing employment/volunteer service as well as what has been successful in gaining equal access.

The team is also working on an informational packet to be presented to students and parents during the IEP process. The packet will include Information on the ADA, Disclosure and AmeriCorps opportunities.

The NWRIT Strategic Plan embraces the following goals:

1. To increase the number of AmeriCorps members in service who have a disability, promote volunteerism as a viable means of skill development for people of all abilities
2. To increase partnerships between AmeriCorps programs and Disability Service Organizations
3. To develop and Inclusive Streams of Service approach to incorporate people with disabilities into all levels of National and Community Service.
4. To maintain the NWRIT as a viable and driving force toward Inclusion.

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LINKS OF INTEREST:

Inclusion:

NSIP (National Service Inclusion Project)

www.serviceandinclusion.org

Volunteerism:

Opportunities in Illinois

www.serve.illinois.gov

AmeriCorps

www.americorps.org

Self-Disclosure:

www.zurinstitute.com/

