

UCPeople

The e-Newsletter for UCP Affiliates

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Happy New Year from United Cerebral Palsy

*The national staff wishes the entire UCP family
a safe and joyful New Year.*

The next edition of UCPeople will be distributed on January 4.

UCP Announces Fannie Mae Partnership

Home-Ability program to help affiliates create homeownership opportunities for people with disabilities nationwide

By Jim Baker
December 21, 2004

United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) announced today the launch of Home-Ability, a partnership program with Fannie Mae, the nation's largest source of financing for home mortgages.

The new United Cerebral Palsy initiative will assist affiliates build local organizational capacity to support a homeownership program for their consumers. In addition, Fannie Mae will educate affiliates and consumers about various financing options for purchasing homes and group homes, modifying for accessibility, and refinancing existing mortgages.



"Through the generosity and vision of Fannie Mae, United Cerebral Palsy will assist our consumers reach the pinnacle of independence: owning their own home," said David Bennett, United Cerebral Palsy Vice President, Development.

The two-year program will be funded by a \$235,000 grant from Fannie Mae's American Dream Commitment, an ambitious initiative to expand access to homeownership for millions of first-time homebuyers.

"Affiliates like United Cerebral Palsy of Texas and others have proved the viability of homeownership programs for people with disabilities," added Bennett. "And their hard word laid the foundation for this national partnership."

Through training and technical assistance from UCP and Fannie Mae, Home-Ability will help affiliates

build local programs to facilitate homeownership and to access home modification financing.

The program will provide:

- *\$22,500 grants to 2 selected flagship affiliates to assist in the implementation of a comprehensive local homeownership initiative.*
- *\$1000 stipends to 20 selected affiliates to assist local homeownership programs.*
- *Training and technical assistance for up to one year from homeownership program development experts, with all costs paid through the Home-Ability program.*
- *A local relationship with the Fannie Mae Partnership office in the community.*
- *An accessible Web site, with key information for first-time homebuyers and people with disabilities.*
- *Fannie Mae's Home Buyer's Assistance, a comprehensive online resource with key information for consumers about financing a home or refinancing an existing loan.*

United Cerebral Palsy affiliates interested in participating in the Home-Ability program must apply by January 21, 2005.

Seven affiliates, which will include two flagship programs, will be chosen by the UCP Professional Council in 2005. Thirteen more affiliates will be chosen during the program's second year.

Applications, deadlines, and more information will be distributed shortly to affiliate executives. For more information on Home-Ability, contact Carl Varner at cvarner@ucp.org.

News and Notes...

Disability Policy Collaboration

President George W. Bush spoke at length about Social Security reform at last week's economic summit in Washington, D.C. Meanwhile, Marty Ford, Disability Policy Collaboration Director of Legal Advocacy, spoke across town about disability and Social Security at a *Campaign for America's Future* media event.

Check out [Capitol Insider](#) for a complete update on the continuing discussion on Social Security reform, and the week's most important public policy news.

Information and Referral Corner

For more I&R information, contact Muffi Lavigne at mlavigne@ucp.org.

DisAbility News and Views Radio: For Kid's Only! Sunday, Dec 26

Alex Moshenko will be co-hosting the radio show and taking calls from all children, and youth with special



needs who want to share their thoughts, hopes, and dreams on the program. Make sure you mark your calendar for this show and tell your children. For more information, or to learn how to listen to the show in your community, visit the DisAbility News Web site at <http://www.disabilitynewsradio.com>.

Montreal Declaration on Intellectual Disability

The Pan-American Health Organization and the World Health Organization held a consultation in Montreal, Quebec, Canada with families, self-advocates, organizational advocates, health care experts and legal experts in the field of intellectual disability for the purpose of creating a statement on the rights of people with intellectual disability. The Arc of the United States was included in this consultation, as a member organization of Inclusion International.

The group drafted the Montreal Declaration on Intellectual disability, which clarifies shared international expectations regarding decision-making about health care, long-term care and accommodations that support inclusion of people with Intellectual disabilities. View a PDF of the declaration now at <http://www.thearc.org/misc/montrealdeclaration.pdf>.

Recommended Articles

Medicaid May be on the Chopping Block

By Laurence M. O'Rourke
McClatchy Newspapers
December 20, 2004

The President and Members of Congress from both parties are looking at ways to cut the federal deficit, including cuts to Medicaid programs.

Using Offensive Language Just Isn't Cool

By Kim Winn, Columnist
The Dallas Morning News
December 16, 2004

Columnist Kim Winn draws the line on language that disrespects people with disabilities and others.

News Round-Up

Federal News

AAPD and Others File Suit against Developer

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, United Spinal Association, and the Equal Justice Center filed a landmark national lawsuit this week challenging widespread violations of federal accessibility requirements by Archstone-Smith Trust, one of the nation's largest developers of apartment buildings. An examination by the Equal Justice Center found frequent violations at properties in several states.

State News

Mississippi Medicaid Deficit near Limit, Governor Threatens to Cut Programs

Gov. Haley Barbour has said he will follow a legal requirement to cut Medicaid next month if the agency is more than 12 percent over budget, which he predicts it will be. Lawmakers could reduce the deficit

with an appropriation early in the legislative session, which starts Jan. 4, but a source for such funding has not been found so far.

Georgia Department of Community Health Looks to Make Medicaid Cuts

The Georgia Department of Community Health, which manages the state's Medicaid program, is proposing anywhere from \$172 million to \$347 million in cuts from the state's Medicaid budget. Carie Summers, the department's chief financial officer, told *The Telegraph* (Macon) that if nothing changes in the coming year, Medicaid will consume nearly one-third of Georgia's new revenue due to growing costs. One of the proposed cuts includes the "independent care waiver," which assists people with disabilities who live at home.

Thousands of Ohio Special Education Teachers May be Deemed Unqualified

Thousands of Ohio special-education teachers – who have state licenses certifying they are trained to teach children with disabilities – may soon be labeled unqualified to teach. For two years, state education officials ignored federal requirements that state special-education teachers must be rated as highly certified in up to four subjects. Ohio, and many other states, hoped for an exemption in the newly reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. However, no exemption was included in the law and, unless teachers take hours of classes, many could lose their jobs.

Federal Judge Issues a Rebuke to Baltimore School System

A federal judge issued a preliminary ruling last week that stated inadequate Maryland funding and financial missteps by Baltimore school officials are hurting Baltimore students with disabilities. U.S. District Judge Marvin J. Garbis stated that spending cuts the school system enacted last year to reduce a \$58 million budget deficit, are "profoundly impacting" student with disabilities. Garbis further criticized school officials for "glossing over" management problems and the impact of the budget crisis on students with disabilities. The ruling was made in an ongoing case filed on the behalf of students with disabilities.

For more information about news clippings, please contact Jim Baker at jbaker@ucp.org.