AccessLetter

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Disability Rights Fund Awards Grants Totaling \$10 million for Rights Advancement

Five years after its launch in 2008, Boston-based Disability Rights Fund (DRF) and its sister fund, the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund (DRAF), have given out \$10 million for rights advancement by organizations of people with disabilities (DPOs) across the developing world.

DIS**ABILITY RIGHTS FUND**

According to a new report on human rights grantmaking by the Foundation Center and the

International Human Rights Funders' Group, DRF is now one of the top 15 foundations by number of human rights grants and is at the top in terms of number of grants to disability rights.

With their pooled resources, DRF and DRAF have been able to fund extraordinary advances for the rights of people with disabilities. In May, a delegation of 12 indigenous leaders with disabilities established a caucus and presented an expert report on conditions for indigenous persons with disabilities at the United Nations (UN) Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Across the Pacific, where treaty ratification is poor, governments are signing (and ratifying) the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) due to the advocacy of DPOs. In Nicaragua and Peru, new national legislation – placed before government through citizen's initiatives - protects and promotes the rights of persons with disabilities.

(More on Disability Rights Fund, page 3)

Aging in Community Survey Reveals Mix of Stability and Uncertainty



In a survey conducted by the Cambridge Community Development Department in June 2013, Cambridge

residents ages 55 and over expressed some interesting opinions, some with far-reaching ramifications. The results from this telephone survey indicate that residents aged 55+ living in the City of Cambridge exhibited a sense of stability when it comes to their future housing options.

For example, fully three of four (75%) "strongly agree" that they plan to stay in their home as long as they can. Also, seven in ten (70%) say they are "very likely" to be able to afford living in their current residence as long as they'd like. Moreover, 41% say they expect to stay in their current home more than 10 years.

However, the survey also found that a certain degree of uncertainty comes into play when residents 55+ are confronted with key variables—particularly surrounding possible changes in health status for themselves or their spouse/partner. In fact, among a list of reasons that *might* make them consider moving, "change in health" topped the list (20% of total responses).

When pressed about what they would do if health reasons kept them from living independently, 42% said they were "unsure" about what they'd do. Interestingly, only about one of five respondents (18%) would consider moving out of their home—while a little over one-third (37%) would look to stay in their homes with some assistance.

(More on Aging in Community, page 4)

Great New Disability Books for Young Readers



The tag line for WONDER. R. I. Palacio's novel (Alfred A. Knopf: 2012) about August Pullman is "You can't blend in when you were born to stand out." It chronicles the story of a spunky ten year old boy and his 5th grade class throughout the year. Going to a new school can be a scary situation

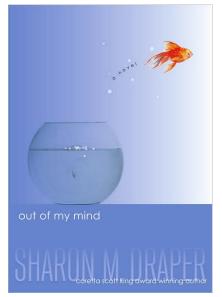
for any kid, but especially for "Auggie" who has a pronounced craniofacial difference.

Written for the middle school audience, this story is first told from Auggie's point of view, but it switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives of the different narrators converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with difference, learning compassion, and growing into acceptance and appreciation. It's a microcosm of society caught in the moment when a disability first goes public. It is a story about the courage of friendship, kindness, and belonging.

The simple honesty of the narratives is compelling. The humor illustrates a powerful tool for lessening tension of awkward situations and building connection. The English teacher's penchant for precepts brings a focus to the importance of words.

I have one reservation about the storyline in *Wonder*. Part way into the story the author makes a strong assertion that Auggie does not have a disability; he just looks different. This may be her way of confronting the parent who wants him

removed from the school because "he is handicapped," and a way to emphasize the qualities and interests he has in common with the non-disabled students. But I do not think there is much validity to her point. The reader knows that Auggie has already undergone 27 surgical procedures for his various facial anomolies, and we soon learn that he is being fitted with hearing aids. The book was the topic of a presentation at the recent Society for Disability Studies conference, and has been widely recommended for reading lists concerning children's literature on disability topics.



Another title in this recent crop of middle grade chapter books is *Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper (Atheneum Books for Young Readers; 2012). Hear how Melody begins her story:

"Words have always swirled around me like snowflakes--each

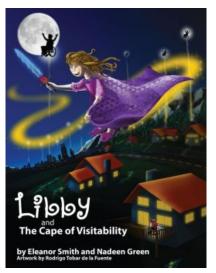
one delicate and different, each one melting untouched in my hands. Deep within me, words pile up in huge drifts. Mountains of phrases and sentences and connected ideas. Clever expressions. Jokes. Love songs."

Eleven-year-old Melody has a photographic memory. Her head is like a video camera that is always recording. She's the smartest kid in her whole school, but no one knows it.

Cerebral palsy has seriously compromised Melody's ability to move and control her body. She cannot walk or talk or write or feed herself. Most people—her teachers and doctors included—don't think she's capable of learning, and up until recently her school days consisted of listening to the same preschool-level alphabet lessons again and again and again. Having all these words and

ideas stuck inside her head is about to drive her "out of her mind."

But everything changes in fifth grade. Her parents know Melody has spirit, determination, intelligence and wit, and her student aide also recognizes this. She finally gets a computer with a keyboard she can use, and an electronic Medi-Talker that allows her to voice her ideas, feelings, opinions and reactions. She starts attending regular classes and excels. But there are more challenges ahead as Melody begins to negotiate the social world of fifth graders and looks for friendship.



Libby and the Cape of Visitability by Eleanor Smith – of Concrete Change in Atlanta – and Nadeen Green (Kindle Edition; 2013) is about three friends who have lived in the same apartment building since they were babies. They have always done

things together until one family moves to the suburbs where their new house is not wheelchair accessible.

Libby, who uses a wheelchair, is hurt when she gets left out of her friend's birthday party. All the children feel estranged and awkward by the turn of events until they happen to and make friends with an adult disability advocate and athlete (a wheelchair rugby player). They learn more about the disability rights movement and set out on their own campaign to change the building code for the housing developer. You can download a PDF of *Libby and the Cape of Visitability* at:

<www.scribd.com/doc/141179017/Libby-andthe-Cape-of-Visitability>

I like the fact that each of these three books looks at what it means to have friends and to belong, but from a different disability perspective. They are written in the voices of the young people. The parents are caring and supportive in the best ways they know. Each child has other supportive individuals and advocates in his or her life. Besides being engaging stories all three books are great for teaching about disability, friendship and belonging. Both *Wonder* and *Out of My Mind* are excellent for working with kids on anti-bullying strategies.

--book reviews by Carolyn Thompson

Disability Rights Fund (cont. from page 1)

Other civil society organizations -- like the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, which is partnering with the National Council of Disabled Women to bring cases of violence against women with disabilities to court -- are taking up the cause. The development process -- with the strong advocacy of people with disabilities -- has, finally, incorporated disability.

By supporting DPOs to use the CRPD, DRF and DRAF are helping to ensure that rights – not charity – set the frame for an approach to disability. From CRPD ratification campaigns to legislative change to rights monitoring, DRF grantees are making their voices heard everywhere. They are shifting the paradigm to "nothing about us without us."



Nonetheless, inclusion of people with disabilities into human rights and development funding is still marginal. People with disabilities make up one billion people around the world – one in seven – and yet

their efforts receive only 3% of human rights funding. Today, as human rights funders meet in New York to talk about the human rights agenda of the 21st century, we must ensure that the agenda and funding that fuels it does not leave anyone behind.

For more information on Disability Rights Fund, visit: <www.disabilityrightsfund.org >.

Aging in Community (cont. from page 1)

But, only about one in five of those who would want to stay in their homes (20%) say they could *not* provide space for a caregiver or relative.

Generally, most respondents see the need for only "cosmetic" repairs (77%) to their existing home to help them continue living there. Only 16% see needed accommodations for "mobility" reasons—despite the fact that 75% also told surveyors they need to climb stairs in their daily routine.

About four in ten (38%) said they'd need "major" (roof, exterior painting) repairs to stay in their home. People see the greatest degree of difficulty in performing "heavy lifting tasks" by themselves (42% "very difficult"), while snow shoveling came in second place on the difficulty scale (22% "very difficult").

Among a range of factors that might apply in a search for new housing, having a kitchen in the unit is the single most important (91% "very important"). Next on the importance list are: being within walking distance of retail (70%), being able to stay in Cambridge (65%) and having access to outdoor space (64%). In line with these findings is the fact that fully 46% of respondents say they'd be "not at all likely" to accept a living situation with a "shared" kitchen.

When provided with a list of reasons why people might consider a shared living situation, the most important centered around being able to share maintenance and upkeep costs—like errands, yard work and snow removal (39% "very important"). Continuing with the theme of "stability", the survey found that fully 81% of its sample of residents 55+ has lived in their current household more than 10 years—47% for more than 25 years. 70% have lived in Cambridge more than 25 years—90% more than 10 years. Despite the preoccupation with health-related concerns, surveyors found that 83% of the sample perceives themselves to be in either "excellent" (41%) or "good" (42%) health.

All in all, these findings suggest that while Cambridge residents 55+ demonstrate a strong

sense of stability on housing options, they also express a fair degree of uncertainty— particularly with regard to health concerns. They also have strong ideas about what they want in their next housing situation—a place in Cambridge, with a private kitchen, within walking distance to retail and some access to outdoor space.

These data indicate that the City of Cambridge has an excellent opportunity to provide information resources on new housing options that meet these clear desires expressed in the survey.

For more information on the survey, visit: <www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Planning/Aging.aspx>.

New Cambridge Accessible Taxicab Dispatcher

Starting August 1, 2013, there is a new toll-free phone number for all eight accessible Cambridge taxicabs: 888-TRANS-21 (888-872-6721). This number will be answered by a live dispatcher 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Accessible Cambridge taxicabs charge the same rates as a standard sedan-type taxicab.



In July, the Cambridge License Commission awarded a new management contract to Ambassador Brattle

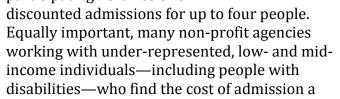
Cab of Cambridge, to handle all accessible taxicab requests. Accessible Cambridge Taxi (ACT) was established to ensure equal access to taxicab services for Cambridge customers with disabilities, especially those individuals who need wheelchair-accessible taxicab service.

"Making sure that a high level of service is available to people with disabilities is very important to me," said George Fiorenza, general manager of Ambassador Brattle. "I'm committed 100% to this program," continued Fiorenza, "people with disabilities need to have an equal opportunity to get to where they need to go."

Museum of Science Announces Free Admission for EBT or WIC Participants

In order to make their exhibits, programs and

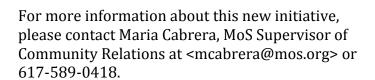
presentations accessible to the broadest possible audience, the Museum of Science (MoS) offers community members a variety of free and reduced admissions options. As you may know, passes that admit up to four people, free of charge, are available in the Cambridge, Boston, and Lynn public libraries, while other participating libraries offer



barrier, can take advantage of the MoS Community Access Program (CAP) that provides free or reduced group admission rates.

While CAP provides no-cost admission to more than 20,000 visitors each year, MoS has developed

a new initiative that expands on their outreach efforts to include those individuals and families not associated with a community agency. Beginning August 1, 2013, Massachusetts EBT or WIC card holders who present a valid photo ID can receive free MoS exhibit hall admission for up to four people, including the cardholder.



Upcoming Events of Interest to the Disability Community (See end of Calendar for all weekly/recurring events)

Museum of Science

- Oct. 3 **Opening Reception: Kimball Anderson's Inside/Outside** The Open Door Gallery presents an exhibit exploring the separation of self and environment. Kimball Anderson is an artist whose experiences of chronic fatigue syndrome and agoraphobia inform the art he creates, manifesting in themes of isolation, recursion of self, inaction, and first-person experience. The artwork explores the quiet and the gentle, while searching for something ambiguous underneath and reflects the period when the artist began to overcome agoraphobia and enter the world. The opening reception will be held from 4-7pm, with a performance at 6pm, and the exhibit will be on display at the Open Door Gallery (89 South Street, Suite 101 in Boston) until November 8. For more information, see <www.opendoorgallery.org> or call 617-350-7713 (voice) or 617-350-6535 (TTY).
- Oct. 10 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting** meets in the 2nd floor conference room at 51 Inman Street, Cambridge from 5:30pm-7pm, with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice) or 617.492.0235 (TTY) or e-mail <ccpd@cambridgema.gov> for more information or to request accommodations.
- Oct. 16 **Assistive Technologies for Living, Learning, Working & Playing in Massachusetts** Sponsored by the Bureau of the State House and coordinated by Easter Seals Massachusetts, this event will feature cutting-edge assistive technology information and demonstrations for people with disabilities. This event will be held from 11am-3pm on the 2nd Floor of the State House in Boston. For more information, contact Joe Bellil at 508-751-6340 or <jbellil@eastersealsma.org>. For information on accessibility and accommodations, please contact Carl Richardson at 857-400-5502 or <Carl.Richardson@state.ma.us>.
- Oct. 30 **Can We Change Our Genes?** This FREE inaugural Lee and Nile Albright Annual Symposium at the Museum of Science (MoS) will be held from 7-9pm. Leading geneticist Tim Spector will address questions

such as, "If you share most of the same genetic material, what makes you so different from your siblings?" and "How much are the things you choose to do every day — what you eat, how you vote, whom you love — determined by your genes, and how much is your own free will?" Using fascinating case studies of identical twins, leading Spector explains how even real-life "clones" with the same upbringing turn out in reality to be unique. This compelling examination of how we become the individuals that we are will be followed by a book signing. For more information, see <www.mos.org>, email <information@mos.org> or call 617-723-2500.

- Nov. 2 **Disability Reframed Presents:** *Silver Linings Playbook.* This 2012 romantic comedy follows a man labeled with bipolar disorder, Pat Solitano (Bradley Cooper), who, after a stint in a mental institution, moves back in with his parents. Pat tries to reconcile with his ex-wife, but things get more challenging when he meets Tiffany (Jennifer Lawrence), a mysterious woman with problems of her own. This screening, followed by a lively audience discussion, will be held from 1-4pm at the Cambridge Main Library, 449 Broadway. Bring your friends & family! Contact CCPD with any accommodations requests or questions at <ccpd@cambridgema.gov> or by phone at 617.349.4692 (voice) or 617.492.0235 (tty). Sponsored by CCPD, Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs and the City of Boston Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities. Join Disability Reframed: A Community Film Series on Facebook, and follow @CambCPD on Twitter for updates!
- Nov. 6 **Emergency Preparedness Meeting** The Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD), in partnership with the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities and the Cambridge Public Health Department, is hosting a meeting to bring together people with disabilities and local emergency preparedness professionals. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, , 2013, from 1pm to 3pm at the Cambridge Police Department, Main Training Room on the fourth floor, 125 Sixth Street in Cambridge. Pre-registration is required by October 30: call Jeffrey Dougan at MOD at 800-322-2020 extension 27316.
- Nov. 13 **What is Life?** This Museum of Science (MoS) Reno Family Foundation Symposium will feature three seminal figures in biological and biomedical sciences who will discuss life as we know it, life as it may have begun, and life as it may evolve in the future. From basic elements of human biology to nuances in aging and illness and on to life forms we've never known before, venture into an investigation of what we know, what we may find out, and what we have yet to imagine. Cocktail reception follows this. The symposium and following cocktail reception will be held from 7-9pm and costs \$20. For more information, see <www.mos.org>, email <information@mos.org> or call 617-723-2500.
- Nov. 14 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting** meets in the 2nd floor conference room at 51 Inman Street, Cambridge from 5:30pm-7pm, with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice) or 617.492.0235 (TTY) or e-mail <ccpd@cambridgema.gov> for more information or to request accommodations.

Weekly & Recurring Events

Ongoing

Injured Worker Support Meetings – Meetings are scheduled by appointment, often the 1st Wednesday of the month, 5:15 - 6:45 pm, but other times can be arranged. Meetings/appointments usually take place at 650 Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, Boston, 4th Floor Conference Room (close to the Kenmore Square MBTA station, a few doors to the right of Barnes & Noble). RSI Action volunteers answer questions and provide resources and support, including the opportunity to view their provider evaluation book, to people with RSIs (Repetitive Strain Injuries) or other workplace injuries. Discussion topics have included medical treatment, insurance/legal issues, and speech recognition software. For more information or to set up a meeting, call 617.247.6827, or go to <www.rsiaction.org>.

Mondays

Low Vision Support Group – meets on the <u>2nd Monday</u> of each month from 10-11:30am at the North Cambridge Senior Center, 2050 Mass Ave. While geared towards seniors, the group is open to all ages. For more information, contact Barbara Duford at <marksgirl4951@gmail.com>.

NAMI Support Group for Caregivers –Sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, this is a free support group for family members, friends and other caregivers of persons with mental illness that provides understanding, comfort, hope and help. This group meets on the <u>1st and 3rd Mondays</u> of each month at 7:30pm at the Cambridge Hospital Learning Center A, 3rd Floor, 1493 Cambridge Street. For more information, see <www.namimass.org/programs>, e-mail <helpline@namimass.org>, or call Elizabeth at 781.646.0397.

OCD Support Group – A casual, peer-led, open discussion of the trials (and triumphs!) of living with OCD and anxiety. All are welcome, all are encouraged to come, although the group strives to keep private and secure, as confidentiality is and will remain of highest priority. The group meets from 7-8:30pm on the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month (excluding holidays) at the Friends Meeting House, 5 Longfellow Park in Cambridge, with a suggested donation of \$5. For more information, email <ocdgroupcambridge@gmail.com>.

Tuesdays

Computer Help for Job Seekers – <u>Every Tuesday</u> from 3:30-5pm Cambridge Community Television (CCTV) offers individualized, flexible computer assistance from a friendly volunteer who can help with job searching, resume writing, online job applications, computer skills, and much more. Work alone or with a group to learn more about computers. This program is open to all job seekers, and there is no need to sign up, just stop by! Please call 617.661.6900 with questions or for more information.

Boston Voice Users – this group for people who use or are interested in using speech recognition or dictation software meets from approximately 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. on the <u>2nd Tuesday</u> of each month at MIT in Building 2, Rm.135. Members explore the developments, available tools and products, and best use of personal computer-based speech-recognition, and invite both commercial and noncommercial entities to present at meetings. To find out more about meetings and discussions go to <www.bostonvoiceusers.org>.

Wednesdays

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT) meets 1-3 p.m. at the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, 2nd floor Conference Room #2 on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Call 617.973.7507 voice or 617.973.7089 TTY or e-mail <aact@ctps.org> for more information or to request interpreters. Security measures require proper ID for access to meetings.

Access to Art: Explorations – Offered by the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston, this is an interactive, multidisciplinary evening workshop that meets at 6pm in the Huntington Avenue Entrance Lobby on the 1st Wednesday of the month for adults with disabilities, with a focus on cognitive disabilities and disabilities that may affect verbal communication. This program is always multi-sensory and does not require one to be verbal. This program was developed with the intention of having it be as inclusive as possible, thus friends and family members are welcome and encouraged to come and take part. This program is led by a facilitator with experience in both art and theatre and one or more musicians. This program is NOT for groups, and advance notice is appreciated. For more information, see

<www.mfa.org> or contact Valarie Burrows at 617.369.3302 or Hannah Goodwin at 617.369.3189, or e-mail <access@mfa.org>.

Amputee Support Group – Offered by Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, all amputees, their family and friends are invited to socialize and discuss common areas of interest, including accessibility and resources, as well as to provide support and share coping strategies. Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 1-2pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 &93). For more information, see www.spauldingrehab.org/events/supportgroupevents or contact Sally Johnson, LICSW at

<www.spauldingrehab.org/events/supportgroupevents> or contact Sally Johnson, LICSW at 617.573.2539 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or by e-mail at <sejohnson@partners.org>.

Assistive Technology Resource Center (ARTC) Open House – The ATRC, which helps people with disabilities in Eastern Massachusetts make informed decisions about assistive technology they can use to increase their independence at home, on the job or in school, holds an open house on the 1st Wednesday of each month from 8:30am-4:30pm. These FREE monthly open houses provide an opportunity to see what kinds of assistive technology products are available, and to try them out. The ARTC is located at the Boston Easter Seals office, 89 South Street (one block from MBTA South Station). Visit www.eastersealsma.org, call 617.226.2634, or email ATRC@eastersealsma.org for more information.

Carroll Center for the Blind Information Day – In order to provide answers to many of the questions people frequently ask about Carroll Center programs and other visual impairment services, they hold monthly information days on the 1st Wednesday of every month. See the campus, learn from rehabilitation instructors, and talk to graduates about their experience in Carroll Center adult and senior rehabilitation and technology programs. Special dates are offered for those seeking tours and information about summer offerings for youth. The staff loves this chance to help participants become informed, relaxed, and motivated! And the lunch is provided free of charge! The sessions start promptly at 10am and end at 2pm. To make a reservation (required), email renee.hall@carroll.org or call 1.800.852.3131 ext. 225 with the name of each guest attending (family and friends are welcome!). The Carroll Center is located at 770 Centre Street in Newton.

Central Square Resume Writing & Job Hunting, FREE Drop-in Assistance – Free help for adults needing assistance with making resumes or job hunting, offered on a first come, first served basis. Offered every Wednesday from 1-3pm at the Central Square Branch of the Cambridge Public Library (45 Pearl Street), this opportunity for assistance is open to all. For more information, contact Maria Balestrieri at <mbalestrieri@cambridgema.gov> or 617.349.4013.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group meets <u>every Wednesday</u> evening, 7-9pm at McLean Hospital in Belmont (de Marneffe Building, 1st floor lobby). Includes a lecture on the <u>2nd and 4th Wednesdays</u>. Call 617.855.2795 or see <www.dbsaboston.org> for more information.

Feeling for Form Introductory Tour of MFA for blind & low vision visitors – The Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of introductory one-on-one guided tours to the Museum and its collections for blind and low vision individuals who want to build a deeper relationship with the Museum. Each monthly session focuses on a different collection and includes wayfinding and verbal description of spaces. These tours are given on the 1st Sunday of the month at 10:30 am and the <u>3rd Wednesday</u> at 6:30 pm. Individuals can attend one or more sessions, whichever interests them. Guided tours can also be scheduled at other times. Pre-registration is not required unless a visitor needs a sighted guide or other access accommodation. Contact Valerie Burrows at 617.369.3302 or <vburrows@mfa.org> to register. Call 617.369.3189 or e-mail <access@mfa.org> or go to <www.mfa.org> for more information. The MFA

is located at 465 Huntington Avenue in Boston, and is accessible by the Green line "E" train to the "Museum of Fine Arts" stop, or the Orange line train to the "Ruggles" stop.

Free introductory tour of MFA in sign language & with assistive listening devices –A new monthly offering at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing. These tours will be given at 6:30 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. No pre-registration is required; meet at the Sharf Visitor Center in the MFA. For more information about accessible programs Valerie Burrows at 617.369.3302 voice, 617.267.9703 TTY or e-mail <access@mfa.org>.

NAMI Connection – a support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets <u>every</u> Wednesday and Friday 10:30-12:00 at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center, 35 Medford Street, Suite 201 in Somerville. The group is free and open to all who self-identify as having a mental illness, regardless of diagnosis. For more information, contact Janel Tan at 617.863.5388 or <tanj@vinfen.org>.

Open Support Group for Adults on the Autism Spectrum – Meets on the <u>2nd Wednesday</u> of each month, 7-8:30 pm at the offices of the Asperger's Association of New England (AANE), 85 Main St., Suite 101, Watertown, MA. A \$5 donation is suggested. RSVP to 617.393.3824, x310 or <Jamie.Freed@aane.org>.

Senior Support Group for Caregivers over 60 – meets on the <u>3rd Wednesday</u> of each month at the Family Resource Center, 20 Gould Street in Reading. Share and learn with other seniors who have adult family members with developmental disabilities. For meeting times or more information, contact Judy SantaMaria at 781.942.4888, x4022 or <familysupport@theemarc.org>.

Spaulding Stroke Support Group – This community-based support group offered by Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital (SRH) provides socialization and education for stroke survivors, meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 3-4pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). See

<www.spauldingrehab.org/events/supportgroupevents> or contact Karen Halfon at 617.573.7143 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or by e-mail at <khalfon@partners.org>.

Thursdays

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting – generally meets on the 2nd Thursday, at 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor Conference Room, 5:30 to 7 p.m. with opportunity for public comment [NOTE: The September meeting will be held on the 3rd Thursday]. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY) or e-mail kthurman@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.

AppShare – Offered by the Easter Seals Assistive Technology Regional Center (ARTC), AppShare is a new drop-in series for people to come to their Boston center with their "smart" devices (both Apple and Android) to share and learn about apps in an informal and relaxed setting. If you enjoy talking about apps or want to learn about new ones - this is the place to be! The ARTC will announce themes for each series prior to the meeting date. All AppShare days are on the 2nd Thursday of the month, and drop-in times are 11:00am-12:00pm and 1:00-2:00pm. For more information, or to request accommodations, see www.eastersealsma.org or contact the ARTC, 89 South Street in Boston (near MBTA South Station) at 617.226.2634 or by email at attro-2nd May 9 series are TBD.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group – meets at Mass. General Hospital <u>every Thursday</u>, 7 - 9 p.m. in the Schiff Conference Center Room, Suite 4A on the 4th floor in the Yawkey Building. Follow the signs. Meetings are free and open to public. For more information call 617.855.2795 or e-mail <mghgroup@dbsaboston.org>.

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Support Group – Offered by Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital (SRH), this weekly support group, which meets <u>every Thursday</u> from 4-5pm, is for anyone affected by SCI, to help and inspire the newly injured through role models and peer mentors, and to support individuals and family members as they begin their post-injury journeys. This group is run by run by Dr. Chris Carter and is held in GBC Office at SRH, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 &93). For more information, see: <www.spauldingrehab.org/events/supportgroupevents> or 617.573.2081 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or by e-mail at <sciboston@aol.com>.

Fridays

NAMI Connection – a support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets <u>every</u> Wednesday and Friday 10:30-12:00 at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center, 35 Medford Street, Suite 201 in Somerville. The group is free and open to all who self-identify as having a mental illness, regardless of diagnosis. For more information, contact Janel Tan at 617.863.5388 or <tanj@vinfen.org>.

Second Fridays are FREE at the MIT Museum – Jump-start your weekend with the MIT Museum! Get up close and personal with Kismet the Robot, or see the world in 3-D through our one-of-a-kind holography exhibit. Enjoy performances, demonstrations, and lectures throughout our galleries. Mix and mingle; relax and unwind. Museum admission, including the galleries and additional activities, is free from 5-8pm on the 2^{nd} Friday of every month. The Museum is located in Building N51 at 265 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge. See <web.mit.edu/museum/programs/secondfridays.html> or call 617.253.5927 for more information.

Saturdays

Boston Acquired Brain Injury Support Group (BABIS) – The mission of this free support group is to provide a positive forum for peer socialization, hope and education for people with acquired brain injury, their family and friends. This group is held on the 1st Saturday of the month, from 10am-12pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 &93). No registration required, just show up! For more information, call Sally Johnson, LICSW at 617.573.2539 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), e-mail sabbisgroup@hotmail.com, or see www.babis.info.

Beyond the Spectrum: Adventures in Art for Children with Autism – Offered by the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) Artful Adventures offers a specially designed program for children ages 8-12 on the Autism Spectrum, including Asperger's Syndrome, accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Upon arrival children will be divided into groups by age and/or needs, and the program meets on the 1st Saturday of each month from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. Each class lasts an hour and a half and combines gallery exploration with an art-making activity. Pre-registration is required by the prior Tuesday. The cost is \$8.00 per child (includes materials and museum admission), and one adult is admitted free with each child ticket, which also includes discounted parking. The program meets in the Education Center in Druker Family Pavilion, Room 159 at 10:20am before the start of each class. For more information, or to pre-register, go to www.mfa.org/programs/community-programs/beyond-the-spectrum, call 617.369.3303 or email artfuladventures@mfa.org.

Sundays

Feeling for Form Introductory Tour of MFA for blind & low vision visitors –These tours are given on the <u>1st Sunday</u> of the month at 10:30 am. Pre-registration is not required for the Sunday tours unless a sighted guide or other access accommodation is needed. See Wednesday listing for details.

"Quiet Day" at the Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation: The Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation in Waltham hosts "Quiet Day" for children with Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD), which affects a variety of disabilities, on the <u>last Sunday</u> of the month from 10am to 5pm. During Quiet Day, the museum will disable any exhibit that produces uncomfortable noise levels, equipment such as sound block headphones, weighted blankets will be offered, and a separate space for reducing stimuli will be available. Admission is \$7.00 per adult and \$5.00 per child, student or senior. Free to children under 6, active and retired US Military, and Museum members. For more information, email <info@crmi.org> or call 781.893.5410 or 617.823.5081.

Access Notice: The City of Cambridge and Commission for Persons with Disabilities do not discriminate on the basis of disability. This **Access***Letter* newsletter is available in e-mail, large print and other alternative formats upon request. To add your name to our mailing list, to inquire about alternative formats, or for information about other auxiliary aids and services or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, contact CCPD.

Cambridge City Council

Henrietta Davis, *Mayor*E. Denise Simmons, *Vice Mayor*Leland Cheung
Marjorie C. Decker
Craig A. Kelley
David P. Maher
Kenneth E. Reeves
Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
Minka vanBeuzekom



City Administration

Richard C. Rossi, *City Manager*Lisa Peterson, *Deputy City Manager*Ellen Semonoff, *Assistant City Manager*, *Human Service Programs*

Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Michael Muehe, Executive Director/ADA Coordinator
Kate Thurman, Disability Project Coordinator
Joanna Berton Martinez, Pro Bono Associate
Katie Ashwill, Pro Bono Associate
Oscar Anderson, Pro Bono Associate

Miriam Cooper, *Chair* JoAnn Haas

Holly Aldrich Nicole Horton-Stimpson

Elizabeth Dean-Clower Alissa Land
Sandy Durmaskin Bet MacArthur
Kara Falise Naomi Pinson

Avner Fink



Access*Letter* is produced by the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, part of the Department of Human Service Programs,

51 Inman Street, second floor, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02139.

We welcome your articles, comments, criticisms, and suggestions. Write us!

Read past issues on our website: www.cambridgema.gov/CCPD

GO GREEN! If you would rather receive your copy of **Access**Letter electronically, please provide us with your name and e-mail address. To request that your name be removed from our mailing list, contact us at 617-349-4692 Voice, 617-492-0235 TTY, 617-349-4766 Fax, or

<ccpd@cambridgema.gov>. Follow us on Twitter! > @CambCPD

and Like us on Facebook! f www.facebook.com/CambCPD

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

51 Inman Street, second floor Cambridge, MA 02139