News & Information for the Access-Minded

October — November 2015

AccessLetter

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Documentary Film *La Casa Linda* Premieres in Cambridge November 7th at 2 pm

Living in the village of Chimayo, New Mexico, Linda Pedro became a pioneer in independent living for people with disabilities, and much more -- an advocate for disability rights, a fearless politician, an artist, and a leader who became the rock in her community.

Several decades ago, as a fledgling legal services attorney, Fred Woods represented Linda --who was paralyzed as the result of an auto accident -- in what started out as a custody case and ended up as a landmark in disabilities law. Now a documentary filmmaker and Cambridge resident, Woods started shooting a documentary about Pedro, *La Casa Linda*, almost seven years ago. "She was the most remarkable person I've ever known," said Woods.

"Linda died this past January at the age of 68. I'll remember her as generous friend who lived out her deepest values, never shied from the truth, and was a wonderful story teller," said Woods. "The film… is her story, told, for the most part, by Linda. It may change the way we think about disability, and about the traditions that define us as Americans."

(More on *La Casa Linda*, page 3)

Because Accessibility and Fashion Don't Have to Be Mutually Exclusive!

Co-founded by Grace Teo and Alice Tin, Open Style Lab (OSL) is a nonprofit organization run out of MIT's International Design Center with a mission of making style accessible to people of all abilities (see "MIT Open Style Lab Students Design Assistive Clothing" in the September-October, 2014 issue of Access*Letter*, online at bit.ly/CCPDAccessLetter).

It is specifically focused on clothing accessibility, holding a summer program connecting engineers, occupational therapists (OTs) and fashion designers (OSL Fellows) with clients with disabilities who have a need for functional clothing.

Historically, the focus on disability has stemmed from the medical model, which emphasizes "curing" individuals, and considers disability the barrier to independence and societal inclusion. This attitude has a tendency of marginalizing the disability community by believing that people with disabilities (PWD) need to be "fixed" in order to fit societal norms and achieve inclusion, rather than encouraging inclusionary practices, such as universal design, to afford them inclusion as they are.

(More on Open Style Lab, page 2)

SAVE THE DATE!

CCPD Presents a National Disability Employment Month Event

Océ Harrison, Keynote Speaker

Wed., October 28, 2015

9:30 to 11:30 AM

Cambridge City Hall Annex

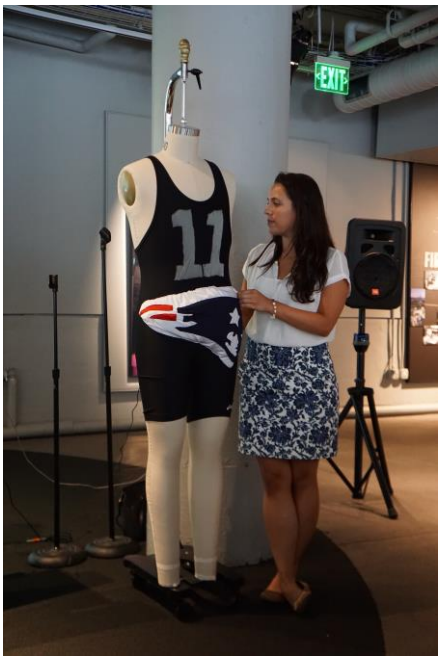
344 Broadway, 2nd floor

(See page 6 for more info)

Open Style Lab

(continued from page 1)

In contrast, the social model of disability considers society to be a primary factor in disabling people. Under this model, the removal of barriers—physical, attitudinal, communicative and other forms of exclusion—is considered vital in improving the quality of life for individuals with disabilities. OSL is an innovative approach to moving away from the medical model. Although assistive technology is becoming more mainstream, many devices intended to help PWD function more independently remain medicalized and certainly not fashionable. With teams comprised of experts from three entirely different fields—engineering, OT, and fashion design, OSL successfully integrates accessibility with fashion.
This summer, 24 Fellows – eight from each of the three fields – were split into interdisciplinary teams of three. Each team was matched with a client, with whom they met periodically over the 10-week course.



Team Theo demonstrates Dry Night Pajamas at Open Style Lab event

In addition to weekly lectures and mentorship by experts in fields such as fashion design, prosthetics, intellectual property, assistive wearables, occupational therapy, the teams spent time getting to know their clients, learning about their needs as well as style preferences and developed a series of prototypes with the goal of ultimately providing the clothing solutions their clients desired. The program wrapped up on August 15 with the second annual Final Showcase, held at the MIT Museum. This article will give you a sampler of the products that were developed.

The Duet was developed for Heidi, a woman who uses a wheelchair and has limited use of her arms. She expressed difficulty in independently donning and doffing pants, making toileting, particularly in public restrooms, very hard. Her team developed the Duet, which is a comfortable and stylish pair of pants with attached underwear that can be unzipped from the sides. Their client reported that it took her 30 minutes to independently toilet in public restrooms with regular pants and that the Duet reduced the time needed by 75%, requiring far less energy consumption.

EduCap is protective headgear that was developed for the staff of the New England Center for Children (NECC), a school for children with autism, some of whom exhibit aggressive behavior on occasion. Staff members were incurring injuries, including concussions, at times when they intervened. In addition to providing head protection, their product needed to appear non-threatening to children, be comfortable enough to wear for several hours at a time, and fit in with the aesthetics of the educational setting. The team's final design, EduCap, acts like a baseball helmet, but has the appearance of a baseball cap. In addition, the bill is magnetically attached to the cap, so that it simply comes off in instances where a child grabs it. Furthermore, to prevent hair pulling, a hidden pouch was sewed into the back of the cap to hold long hair. After receiving an enthusiastic response towards and lots of interest in it, the creators of EduCap are now looking into making their product more widely available.

The Dry Night Pajamas were created for Theo, a 10 year old boy who uses a catheter and was having problems with leakage at night. His team created a single piece pair of pajamas by adding a pocket over the front lower abdomen portion of a wrestling singlet. The pocket, which bears the Patriots logo, can hold either a Zorb pad or an overnight catheter bag, each a method for preventing leakage. They designed the pajamas to

look like athletic gear so Theo would be comfortable wearing them at sleep overs.

Katherine is a client with a connective tissue disorder that affects her vascular system and joints, causing chronic pain and dislocations. While she does not experience any challenge in dressing herself, she has a hard time holding her head up unassisted for long periods of time. She has tried a variety of neck braces, but found them to be bulky and hot, and was growing tired of questions from well-meaning friends and colleagues asking what was wrong. She asked her team to design a non-medicalized product that would be both fashionable and functional. Enter Heads-Up, a head scarf with suspender straps that fasten to her belt, easing the load on her neck via the suspender pulling system. Katherine's team even matched the color and a similar design element of her beloved service dog's collar!

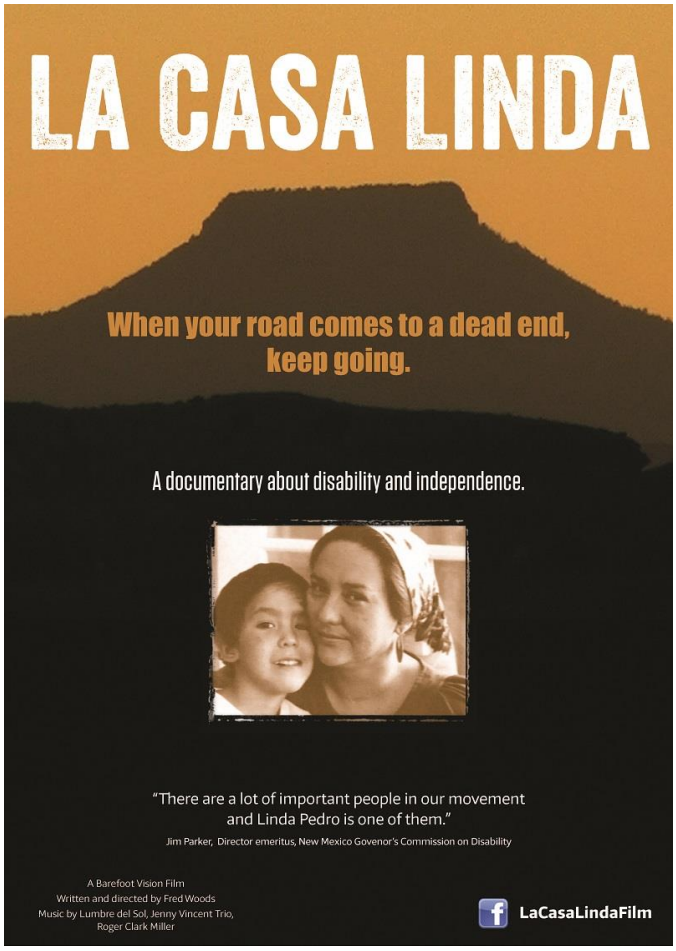
Each team of fellows kept a blog documenting the design process from beginning to end (see www.openstylelab.org). NECC's team summed up the culmination of their hard work quite nicely: "[The Final Showcase] was a chance to tell a large group of people just how proud we were of our product. It was a chance to explain it in detail to people who were truly interested. We were able to see our OSL fellows succeed and pridefully explain their processes and products as well. And, perhaps most importantly, we saw many satisfied clients watching their solutions come to life in front of them. Most notably, I remember turning to watch the audience for a moment during Team Katherine's presentation and seeing their client, Katherine, smiling. The team members were describing not only how their product would help Katherine but how the design elements that were incorporated into it reflected who Katherine is as a person: an enthusiastic dog lover. I couldn't remember the last time I had seen someone with such a big smile. It was that smile that justified 10 weeks of grueling work."

--by Kate Thurman

La Casa Linda

(continued from page 1)

As a resident of her small village in northern New Mexico, Pedro immersed herself in her Hispanic heritage and in Native American ways to become a spiritual mentor and a political leader who challenged the corrupt local power structure. When drugs threatened to overwhelm her village she faced her greatest challenge as she turned to the community's oldest traditions to lead a campaign for renewal.



Woods has been an attorney, political consultant and film and video producer. Two of his television spots have won Best of Broadcasting awards from the New England Broadcasting Association and his short-form historical documentaries have been incorporated into exhibits by the National Park Service.

The first East Coast showing of *La Casa Linda* will be at the Cambridge Public Library, 449 Broadway on Saturday, November 7, at 2:00pm. This free event is sponsored by the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities and the Boston Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities, as part of "Disability Reframed: A Community Film Series."

Following the screening, there will be an audience discussion panel with the filmmaker and Robyn Powell, internationally recognized authority on the rights of parents with disabilities and their families. We hope to see you there.

Join Disability Reframed: A Community Film Series and visit *La Casa Linda* Film on Facebook!

Written and directed by Fred Woods

Music by Roger Clark Miller, the Jenny Vincent Trio, Lumbre del Sol

Filmed on location in Chimayo, New Mexico

Running time 1 hour

Vera Study Seeks Assault Survivors

Are you a person with a disability or a Deaf person who is 18 or older? Have you experienced a sexual assault or been forced to do a sexual act when you did not want to or have had a sexual act done to you when you did not want to after you were 15 years old?

You could be eligible to take part in a study about what happens after an assault, including people's experiences of asking for help.

We will be conducting interviews at accessible locations in Boston. Accommodations will be provided, including qualified ASL interpreters. All participants will be compensated $40 to thank them for their time. All information you share with us will be strictly confidential.

What we learn from you may help others!

For more information or to schedule an interview, **please call, text,** or **email Beth at (508) 717-1784 or e.beatriz@neu.edu.**

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

Oct. 2 **Artist Talk and Reception: Shades of Inclusion** – Hosted by the Open Door Gallery at VSA Massachusetts (89 South Street in Boston), Artist Leaders from Arts Connect International unpack what inclusion means to each of them through their respective work. The show beckons the viewer to interact with the nebulous term of inclusion, asking each of us to examine our own inclusionary bias, opening the term for critique, investigation and building. Above all, the exhibit is a celebration of the diversity found in our local and international communities, utilizing art as a catalyst for multi-dimensional conversations on inclusion. This free event will be held from 6-10pm and requires registration. For more information or to register, visit www.vsamass.org/gallery, email jon@vsamass.org or call 617.350.7713 (voice) or 617.350.6535 (tty).

Oct. 3 **Open Captioned (OC) Performance of Rodgers + Hammerstein's CINDERELLA** – OC will be provided at this 2pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Tickets start at $44 and may be purchased online, at the Boston Opera House Box Office (539 Washington Street in Boston) or by phone at 617.880.2419. Be sure to request OC seating. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit http://boston.broadway.com/accessible_services/. For information on the musical, click on the "Shows" tab.

Oct. 3 **Depression and Neurotherapeutics: A free educational program exclusively for patients, families, and friends** – Presented by MGH, this free symposium is designed exclusively for patients, families and friends and will introduce several novel treatments for depression, with a focus on device-based technologies for difficult to treat symptoms and treatment-resistant depression. The goal is to provide a knowledge base for patients seeking or currently receiving psychiatric treatment, and also for their loved

ones. Experts from the MGH Dept. of Psychiatry will provide an overview of depression followed by a series of talks focused on specific treatment modalities. We will cover the use of noninvasive techniques such as Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation, convulsive treatments such as Electroconvulsive Therapy, and surgical neuromodulaiton such as Deep Brain Stimulation. Finally, we will discuss the use of Ketamine as a novel indication for the treatment of depression. The symposium will also include presentations by members of a patient and family panel who will give a first-hand account of their journey through the recovery process and engage in a dialogue with participants, followed by a 15 minute question and answer session. Complimentary coffee, tea, and lunch will be served. This program will be held in the Starr Center Auditorium, Charles River Plaza, 185 Cambridge Street, 2nd floor in Boston from 10am-3:45pm. For more information or to register, visit http://www.massgeneral.org/psychiatry/about/pe_neuro_program2015.aspx, call 866.644.7792 or email educationprogram@partners.org.

Oct. 4 **Audio Described (AD) Performance of Rodgers + Hammerstein's CINDERELLA** – AD will be provided at this 1pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Be sure to request AD when purchasing tickets. See Oct. 3 listing for the remaining details.

Oct. 8 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting** – meets in the 2nd floor Conference Room at 51 Inman Street from 5:30-7pm with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY), or e-mail ccpd@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.

Oct. 10 **American Sign Language Performance of Rodgers + Hammerstein's CINDERELLA** – ASL will be provided at this 2pm performance at the Boston Opera House. Be sure to request ASL seating. See Oct. 3 listing for the remaining details.

Oct. 12 **Boston Children's Museum Morningstar Access** –Morningstar Access offers children with special needs/medical needs the opportunity to visit the Museum from 8-10am, a time when there are only a few other visitors. At these times, there is a limit of 100 guests, so children and their families can explore the Museum with less concern about infections and large crowds. Fee is $8 per person (half-priced admission; free for members) and registration is required. For more information or to register, visit www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/morningstar or email Saki Iwamoto, Health and Wellness Educator at Iwamoto@BostonChildrensMuseum.org or call 617.986.3697.

Oct. 13 **Celebration of International White Cane Day** – Come celebrate the independence of white canes and help raise public awareness of the White Cane Law, which requires motorists to come to a complete stop when they see a pedestrian using a guide dog or white cane at a street crossing. This celebration will be held in the Grand Hall of the State House from 10 to noon. For more information, contact the Orientation and Mobility Department at the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind at 617.626.7581 or 800.392.6450, extension 626.7581.

Oct. 15 **Access . . . It's Not As Scary as You Think!** – Many museums, historic sites, and other cultural organizations are just starting to understand the necessity of access within their institutions. This introduction will include an exploration of myths and realities surrounding people with disabilities and will strengthen your comfort level enabling you to better serve this audience. An overview of access services, practical tips, scenarios, and legalities of the Americans with Disabilities Act will arm you with tools to make it work! This workshop will be held at 10am at the Peabody Essex Museum (www.pem.org), 161 Essex Street in Salem. Participants will be welcome to continue networking with colleagues and enjoy the museum after the workshop. Pre-registration is required at www.ca-ne.org. A $10 donation is requested to cover the costs and materials for the training. For American Sign Language or other accommodations please contact Iwamoto@BostonChildrensMuseum.org by October 8, 2015.

Oct. 17 **"Rethink Challenging Kids" Think:Kids Conference** – Think:Kids is a program in the Department of Psychiatry at MGH and was originally known as The Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) Institute. It was

established to use the CPS approach to understanding and helping challenging children and adolescents that was described originally by Dr. Ross Greene in his book, *The Explosive Child*, and Dr. Greene and Dr. Stuart Ablon's book *Treating Explosive Kids: The Collaborative Problem Solving Approach*. This event is their first annual conference for parents and professionals and will be held at the Microsoft NERD Center, 1 Memorial Drive in Cambridge from 9am-5pm. Registration fees start at $179 per person. For more information, including the day's agenda, and to register, visit www.thinkkids.org, email info@thinkkids.org or call 617.643.6030

Oct. 17 **Accessible Hike in Newburyport** – Take a gentle hike with the Universal Access Program (UAP) and Stavros Outdoor Access. Teamwork and assistive equipment, such as the Terra Trek mountain wheelchair, unite people of all abilities! Bring a lunch and a Halloween costume! Enjoy an hour-long walk through eerie vignettes, spooky sketches and haunting scenes from Theater in the Open. Program will run from noon-4pm at Maudslay State Park, 74 Curzon Mill Rd in Newburyport, and costs $3 per person, $5 for families, and $25 for groups. To register, call Stavros Outdoor Access at 413.259.0009

Oct. 24 **Relax…Refresh…Recharge! for Persons with Dementia & Their Caregivers** – Hosted by the Cambridge and Somerville Alzheimer's Partnership (CSAP), this FREE 9-noon event is for persons with Alzheimer's Disease or related dementia and their caregivers. The event, which is being held at Sancta Maria's Windsor House, 799 Concord Ave in Cambridge, is broken down into workshops and will include therapeutic activities, such as Reiki and mini golf; presentations on Memory Cafes and enhancing the cultural and creative life of people with dementia; and music therapy. RSVP (required) by Oct. 9 to Roberta Robinson at 617.665.3113 or rrobinson@challiance.org.

Oct. 28 **Disability & Employment: Looking Ahead to the Next Quarter Century** – CCPD invites employers & managers to this presentation with Oce Harrison, Project Director of the New England ADA Center, professor of Disability Studies, and expert on disability employment. Having marked the first 25 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) earlier this year, CCPD now recognizes October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Ms. Harrison will facilitate an interactive discussion, offering her expertise on employing persons with disabilities to employers, supervisors, and hiring managers. This is a great opportunity for employers to learn about the vast benefits of hiring qualified individuals with disabilities and to ask any questions they may have. This event will be on Wednesday, October 28 from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM, in the second floor conference room of City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway. RSVP is encouraged but not required. To RSVP, request ASL or other accommodations, contact CCPD at ccpd@cambridgema.gov, 617.349.4692 (voice), or 617-492-0235 (tty). Light refreshments will be served.

Nov. 7 **Disability Reframed presents: *La Casa Linda*** – Disability Reframed: A Community Film Series will present the East Coast premiere of *La Casa Linda*, a documentary about disability and independence, written and directed by Cambridge resident Fred Woods, who will be joining a panel discussion with disability rights experts following the screening. This event will be held in the Lecture Hall of the Cambridge Public Library, 449 Broadway. For more information about the film, see http://bit.ly/LaCasaLinda. To request ASL or other accommodations, contact CCPD at 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (tty) or ccpd@cambridgema.gov. Join Disability Reframed on Facebook! www.facebook.com/groups/DisabilityReframed

Nov. 9 **Basic Rights in Special Education** – Presented by the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN), this workshop for parents and guardians will provide a basic understanding of the complex special education laws and procedures. It will be held from 6-8pm at the Community Charter School of Cambridge, 245 Bent Street. Although free, registration is required: www.fcsn.org, 617.236.7210, 800.331.0688, info@fcsn.org.

Nov. 12 **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) Monthly Meeting** – meets in the 2nd floor Conference Room at 51 Inman Street from 5:30-7pm with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY), or e-mail ccpd@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations.

Nov. 17 **FREE Adaptive Ice Skating** – Join DCR's Universal Access Program (UAP) for an afternoon of skating and socializing, from 11:30am-1:30pm at Cronin Rink, 870 Revere Beach Pkwy in Revere. Use your wheelchair, an ice sled, or conventional skates on the ice! Spin, race, slalom, Socialize, and play gently competitive games with others! Ice sleds and conventional skates available. Call the UAP to register: 413.545.5758 or email marcy.marchello@state.ma.us.

Nov. 22 **Boston Children's Museum Morningstar Access, Evening Edition!** – Same details as the October 12 listing, except this program will be held from 6-8pm.

Weekly & Recurring Events

Access to Art tours – the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of visitor centered, interactive tours designed for groups with disabilities or if persons with disabilities prefer an individual tour with a companion or care partner. There is no fee for these tours but most require pre-registration. Contact us for a sighted guide or other access accommodation: Hannah Goodwin at 617.369.3189 (voice), 617.369.3395 (TTY), or email access@mfa.org. The MFA is located at 465 Huntington Avenue and is accessible by the Green line "Museum of Fine Arts" stop, or the Orange line "Ruggles" stop. Please visit www.mfa.org for more information.

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. Appointments usually take place at 650 Beacon Street, Kenmore Square, Boston, 4th Floor Conference Room. RSI Action volunteers answer questions and provide resources and support to people with RSIs (Repetitive Strain Injuries) or other workplace injuries. To set up a meeting or more info, call 617.247.6827, or visit www.rsiaction.org.

Mondays

FREE Basic Yoga for Women – Offered by the Cambridge Women's Center at 46 Pleasant Street, this group meets each Monday from 6-7pm and uses basic breath work and poses to relax and rejuvenate the mind, body and spirit. Space is limited, so pre-registration is required at 617.354.6394 or maddybeauregard@gmail.com.

NAMI Support Group for Caregivers – A free support meeting sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) for family members of people with mental illness where they can talk frankly about their challenges and support each other in coping with all the problems that arise in dealing with their loved ones. This group meets on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Mondays of each month at 7:30pm at the Cambridge Hospital Learning Center, Conference Room A, 3rd Floor, 1493 Cambridge Street. For more information, see www.namimass.org/programs, or contact Elizabeth at elizabeth@nami-cambridgemiddlesex.org or 781.646.0397.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group – meets biweekly on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month from 7-8:30pm at the Friends Meeting House, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge. This group is open to anyone with OCD or related disorder and is a casual, open discussion of the trials and triumphs! of living with OCD. $5.00 suggested donation. For more information e-mail ocdgroupcambridge@gmail.com.

Tuesdays

Computer Lab Open to Public – Every Tuesday from 3-5:45 pm Cambridge Community Television at 438 Massachusetts Avenue offers free computer access, plus assistance from a friendly volunteer who can help with job searching, online job applications, basic computer skills, and much more. This drop-in time is open to the public and there is no need to sign up, just stop by! Call 617.661.6900 for more information.

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 and 3 on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Call 617.973.7507 (voice) or 617.973.7089 (TTY) or email aact@ctps.org to request interpreters.

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 1-2:30pm on the 5th floor, in the Lantern Room 5, 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 617.952.6254 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or by email 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 61 7.226.2634, or email ATRC@eastersealsma.org for more information.

Carroll Center for the Blind Information Day – Learn more about Carroll Center programs and our visual impairment services the 1st Wednesday of every month (except in January and July). See the campus, learn from rehabilitation instructors, and talk to graduates about their experience in adult and senior rehabilitation and technology programs. And lunch is provided free of charge! Sessions start promptly at 10am and end at 2pm. *Special dates are offered tours about summer offerings for youth.* Staff loves the chance to help participants become informed, relaxed, and motivated! To make a reservation (required), email maureen.foley@carroll.org or call 1.800.852.3131 ext. 225 w. the name of each guest attending. Family and friends are welcome. The Carroll Center is located at 770 Centre Street in Newton.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group meets every Wednesday from 7-9pm in the cafeteria in de Marneffe Building at McLean Hospital in Belmont. On the 2nd and 4th Wednesday there is a lecture from 7-8pm, then group from 8-9pm. Call 617.855.2795 or visit www.dbsaboston.org for more information.

Free tour of MFA in American Sign Language (ASL) – for visitors and their family and friends who are fluent in ASL. Monthly offering at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston, the tour explores a different part of the Museum each month. These tours will start at 6:30pm 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 call 617.369.3302 (voice), 617.369.3395 (TTY) or e-mail access@mfa.org.

HOLLAoffline: We've Got Your Back! – Join the Cambridge Women's Center on the last Wednesday of every month for a free street harassment support and discussion group, open to all who identify as women. We're here as a resource and we've got your back! 7-8pm at the Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street in Cambridge. For more information, email boston@ihollaback.com.

Housing Search Workshop – Learn how to conduct a successful housing search and how to communicate with housing authorities, agencies and landlords from 10am-noon on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at the Boston Center for Independent Living, 60 Temple Place, 5th Floor, Boston. For more information, call 617.338.6665.

Life Changes Support Group for Women – Change happens in life whether we choose it or whether it catches us by surprise. Either way, you don't have to be alone. Whatever new or different thing you're dealing with, whether the start of something new, an ending or a changing situation, come and let us hold your hand through it. Together we'll pool our wisdom; we'll look at what got you here, offer some tools for getting through and guidance for next steps. We'll use some writing, art, a little ritual but mostly good old fashioned support. This group is held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month from 6:30-8pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street. For more information, email Susan at changegroup26@gmail.com.

NAMI Connection – Support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets every 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. *We are moving to the first floor, exact room# tba.*

Open Support Group for Adults on the Autism Spectrum – Meets on the 2nd Wednesday 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 3rd Wednesday 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 Santa Maria 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 3-4:30pm at Spaulding Rehab Hospital, 300 First Avenue, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). Contact Karen Halfon at 617.952.6560 (voice), 1.800.439.2370 (TTY), or e-mail at khalfon@partners.org. Visit us at www.spauldingrehab.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, 5:30-7pm with opportunity for public comment. Call 617.349.4692 (voice), 617.492.0235 (TTY) or e-mail ccpd@cambridgema.gov for more information or to request accommodations. [NOTE: the Commission will not be holding a meeting in August].

Brain Injury Survivor Support Group in Bedford – Sponsored by the Brain Injury Association of MA, this group is held on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 1-3pm in the Community Room at Village at Taylor Pond, 3000 Taylor Pond Ln. (59 Middlesex Tpk.) in Bedford. Please contact Joanne Stephen at joannejstp@aol.com or 781.698.6169 before attending.

DBSA-Boston (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston) Support Group – meets at Mass. General Hospital every Thursday, 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.

Ladies, Let's Talk About It: Women's Narcotic Anonymous (NA) Meeting – meets every Thursday at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street, from 6:30-8pm. This is a support group for women recovering from drug and alcohol abuse. For more information, call 617.354.8807

One-on-One for Women with Nurse Pat – Held on the 3rd Thursday from 12:45-1:30pm at the Cambridge Women's Center, 46 Pleasant Street. Need any health related support or questions answered? Sign up in

advance or walk in for a 15-min individual consulting time with Pat Maher, Nurse Practitioner from Cambridge Health Alliance. For more information or to sign up, call 617.591.6731

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Support Group – Offered by the Greater Boston Chapter, National Spinal Cord Injury Association. Weekly support group meets every Thursday 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 held at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, 6th floor, Lantern Room, 300 First Ave, Charlestown Navy Yard (accessible by MBTA bus routes 89 & 93). E-mail sciboston@aol.com for more information.

Fridays

NAMI Connection – a support group for adults with mental illness sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), meets every Wednesday and Friday 10:30am-12:00pm at the Cambridge Somerville Recovery Learning Center. See Wednesday listing for details.

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 2nd 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 babisgroup@hotmail.com, or visit 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. 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 $9.50 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.

Access to Art: Second Saturdays -- For individuals with memory loss or dementia, and their care partners. Second Saturdays meet at 10am on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register for a tour please call 617.369.3302 (voice) or email: access@mfa.org.

Sundays

Computer Lab Open to Public – Every Sunday from 4-5:30pm Cambridge Community Television at 438 Massachusetts Avenue offers free computer access, plus assistance from a friendly volunteer who can help with job searching, online job applications, basic computer skills, and much more. This drop-in time is open to the public and there is no need to sign up, just stop by! Call 617.661.6900 for more information.

Wenham Museum Spectrum Express -- Welcomes families with members on the autism spectrum to come enjoy the model railroad trains and their other favorite exhibits the 1st Sunday of each month at 9am at regular admission prices or free for members. The museum opens to the general public at 10am. Visit www.wenhammuseum.org/youth_families.html or call our Welcome Desk at 978.468.2377 with any questions.

Feeling for Form Tours of MFA for blind & low vision visitors -- The Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in Boston offers a series of guided tours for visitors who are blind or have low vision 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. The Sunday tours are held on the 1st Sunday of the month at 1pm, with the exception of some holiday weekends, and require pre-registration at least one week in advance. Call 617.369.3302 to register. Family and friends are invited to come along. Guided tours can also be scheduled on request, please contact Hannah Goodwin at 617.369.3189 or access@mfa.org for more information.

Access Notice: The City of Cambridge and Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) does not discriminate on the basis of disability. **Access*Letter*** newsletter is available via email, in 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.

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Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities
51 Inman Street, 2nd Floor
Cambridge, MA 02139