



THE YEAR 2012 IN REVIEW

# ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

YOUR POLICY TRAINING AND TECHNICAL RESOURCE

## Upcoming Initiatives

- Work to streamline process to increase access to Non-Emergency Medical Transportation for people with disabilities.
- Insure that people with disabilities have good access to the State Healthcare Reform Initiatives (Health Insurance Exchange, Reform 2020)
- Reduce use of restrictive procedures in schools
- Improving disability parking and public transportation
- Increased bullying prevention measures in Minnesota schools

## Our Mission

We are a state agency providing leadership to empower and strengthen the rights of Minnesotans with disabilities. We collaborate with the public and private sectors as a policy, training and technical resource advisor.

# Prepared to lead



MSCOD held its annual Advocacy Day at the Capitol in March, 2012.

As the 2013 legislative session begins with a large number of new house and senate members, MSCOD is gearing up to work collaboratively with our partners and other state agencies to empower and strengthen the rights of Minnesotans with disabilities.

To kick off the 2013 legislative session, MSCOD hosted its 2013 Annual Legislative Forum on January 7th to hear from the House and Senate leadership on what to expect in the 2013 legislative session as key priorities in healthcare, employment, and transportation. As a leader in collaborating with the public and private sectors, MSCOD also invited non-profits and other key stakeholders to share their legislative priorities so we can build consensus and community support on key issues important to Minnesotans with disabilities.

As the session progresses, be sure to check out our website for legislative updates at [www.disability.mn.us](http://www.disability.mn.us).



# What we do

**POLICY:** MSCOD advises the Governor, state legislature, state agencies and local units of government on issues affecting Minnesotans with disabilities. We analyze legislative initiatives and advise how proposed policies will impact the disability community. Our goal is to ensure all policymakers understand the effects of their decisions on Minnesotans with disabilities.

**TRAINING:** MSCOD provides customized training on a variety of issues, including: disability awareness, emergency preparedness, building access, advancing the rights of people with disabilities and more.

**TECHNICAL:** MSCOD is a technical expert on numerous disability matters, including disability parking, transportation access, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, building codes, assistive technology, accessibility and employment rights.

## Message from MSCOD Council Chair

MSCOD is 40 years old. The world has changed a great deal over the years such as personal computers, internet and cell phones to name just a few. MSCOD has always had the ability to adjust and have the forethought to do what is best for all people with disabilities. We continue to utilize our strategic planning process to ensure we are meeting the needs of Minnesota.



In recent years we have prevailed through significant budget reductions and staffing reductions of over 50%. Not long ago our very existence was in question. It was only due to the commitment of MSCOD staff, council members and citizens of Minnesota that we still exist. I am extremely proud to be part of MSCOD, and you can be assured that you can treat us as an extension of your staff on disability issues...that's why we exist.

— David Schwartzkopf

## Message from MSCOD Executive Director

2012 has been a year focused on delivering government services more effectively and MSCOD is no exception. Throughout 2012 we have spent time refocusing

on employment for people with disabilities. As the baby boomers begin to retire, Minnesota needs to be positioned to fill the needs of this new 21st century workforce.



After 22 years of implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, people with disabilities still face physical and programmatic barriers in the labor market. People with disabilities are one of the largest minority groups in the state and still are unemployed at a rate of 13%.

Despite all this, I am still optimistic for progress. People with disabilities are in a unique situation to fill our workforce gap in Minnesota and MSCOD is eager to lead that charge.

— Joan Willshire

## 2012 MSCOD ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT RECOGNITION WINNERS



### MINNESOTA AWARD

**Bruce Lattu of MnDOT**

Throughout his career at MnDOT, Bruce has worked to empower those with disabilities to be self advocates.

### ACCESS AWARD

**Bob Brown, of Mountain Iron, MN**

Bob has help build more than 990 home access ramps for people who use wheel-chairs in Northeast Minnesota.



### ABOVE AND BEYOND VETERAN'S EMPLOYMENT AWARD

**Disabled American Veterans of Minnesota**

With the challenge to hire 4-5 additional employees, the DAV has successfully hired 5 young Iraq/Afghanistan disabled veterans.

### MENTORSHIP AWARD (Individual)

**Vicki Dalle Molle of SEMCIL and DHS**

Vicki has provided extensive services to people with disabilities from independent living to home care and beyond.



### MENTORSHIP AWARD (Corporate)

**Cargill's LEARN Program in Hopkins**

The program provides individual career- and job-skill development through work-based learning experiences with Cargill partners.

### EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR (small)

**LJP Enterprises Waste in North Mankato**

Owners Larry and Judy prioritize accommodations for employees during the job application process and in the work environment.



### EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR (large)

**Walgreens Distribution Center in Rogers, MN**

The facility employs about two dozen workers with disabilities. Walgreens promotes signing in the workplace.



Speakers Kim Peck, Don Lavin and Joe Shapiro address the crowd during the 2012 MSCOD Annual Awards Event

At MSCOD, we know that the key to creating real opportunities for employment for people with disabilities doesn't always involve leg-islation or laws — it requires pervasive social change. People with disabilities are real assets to the organizations they work for, but until employers see that in action, they are often reluctant to recruit and hire people with disabilities. We hold our Annual Awards Event to create that change and to highlight both the employers and citizens who have made a real positive difference in employment opportunities for the disability community. By sharing the stories of employers who say that their employees with disabilities are often their best workers, we actively change the uninformed assumption that employees with disabilities are a burden.

# MSCOD's 2012 HIGHLIGHTS



MSCOD Accessibility Specialist Margot Imdieke Cross talks building code with an invitee during the MSCOD Annual Awards in October.

- Worked to restore 20% PCA Relative Rate Cut for family members caring for a person with a disability.
- Protecting the voting rights of people with disabilities who are under guardianship.
- Ensured that Minnesota State Council on Disability was not eliminated with a new sunset date of 2018.
- Monitored and provided recommendations to prevent bullying in schools.
- Ongoing guidance for non-emergency medical transportation to increase efficiency, match needs, measure performance, and establish a better system for resolving complaints.
- Supported Transportation opt outs to allow communities to create their own transit services to meet their local transportation needs.

## Who We Are

### STAFF

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### COUNCIL MEMBERS

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#### Vice Chair

Barb Stensland, Bemidji

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Kathy Peterson, Warren

Mark Hughes, Redwood Falls

Bob Johnson, Fergus Falls

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