

The 2018 VOR Wisconsin Report

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I am 74 and my wife and I have a daughter who is probably brain injured as she keeps expanding her abilities and yet her need for control severely limits her life. Her lungs are compromised and so she does three breathing treatments a day which also limits her social life. She still lives with us and as she sees her friends at VIP Services a “sheltered workshop” in Elkhorn WI. move from their families she becomes more loving and easier to live with.

We have an active A-Team in Wisconsin but they are also localized and do not reach out through e-mails etc. Two pieces of Wisconsin Legislation both good seem to have gone through on a bi-partisan basis even though the Republicans (who have all three branches of State Government) were the leaders and the Democrats possible because of one of their leaders previously working with a summer program for IDD kids fully supported then as well. The first was a simple statement that the State fully supported “real choice” and the second was that in a bill dealing with Employment First that NO agency would write any rules that precluded pre-vocational services.

While these activities have taken place, the Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) is busy holding conferences that exclude any mention of pre-vocational services and Disability Rights Wisconsin the State’s Protection and Advocacy agency is upholding the National effort of not representing any individual who would benefit from “sheltered work”.

Unfortunately, I know little on the housing side. The State many years ago set the housing standard at 8 units, max, and closed all but two of the State’s housing options for IDD. A “facility” for the medically fragile and a facility for the behavioral challenged are still operated by the State. As of two years ago DRW as part of their annual plan still had closing both facilities as a goal. It seems that no new eligible individuals are being admitted and no one is representing their interest including the private lawyer known to be the go to lawyer for IDD.

On our part, it will first take education - short well written pieces that simply explain that the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) attack against Honda must be shown for what it is nothing but a bully trying to embarrass a national corporation held in high esteem as it did to Goodwill who most unfortunately gave up partly because we did not stand with them and they were isolated. Once we have been educated we must act on both the State and Federal levels.