

## **PENNSYLVANIA REHABILITATION COUNCIL (PaRC)**

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### **WEEKLY UPDATE JULY 31, 2020**

**“The Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council has scheduled a Public Meeting for Wednesday, August 5, 2020 from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Wolf’s guidelines, this meeting will be held virtually through Audio Teleconferencing via Chorus Call. CART will also be available for this meeting via Zoom. Anyone who is interested in receiving access to join the conference call, please send a request by Friday July 31, 2020 to [racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org](mailto:racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org) or call (717) 975-2004 to leave a voice message. Additional accommodations are available upon request. Space is limited. Anyone who would like to make Public Comment prior to the meeting may submit comments via email to [racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org](mailto:racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org) or voice message at (717) 975-2004. A recording of this call will be available on the PaRC website following the meeting.”**

**Reminder, if you want to join the call, you need to RSVP to 717-975-2004 or [racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org](mailto:racucpca@ucpcentralpa.org)**

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\*If you no longer wish to receive this update, please contact Katie Haley at [mary.haley@ucpcentralpa.org](mailto:mary.haley@ucpcentralpa.org) to have your name removed.\*

**NOTE:** This update is for informational purposes only. The PaRC and Support Staff are not responsible for the accuracy of this information. Some of the information found in this update you may have already received from another source. The PaRC or the Support Staff do not use this update as a vehicle to express their views and positions. As of **July 31, 2020**, all links have been verified. Please credit the PaRC Support Project for any information forwarded to others. Thank You.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** The mission of the Council is to inform and advise the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Legislature, and the Governor on the diverse issues affecting employment of people with disabilities.

**The PaRC 2019 Annual Report can be found on our webpage or by clicking on the following link**

<http://parac.org/reports/2019AnnualReport.pdf>

**Find Your Local CAC Meeting Dates:** Please go to our website [www.parac.org](http://www.parac.org) and click on the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) link to find dates, locations, times, agendas and minutes, etc. for information on your CAC.

**\*\*\* PaRC Calendar Year 2020 –Please Mark your Calendars \*\*\***

**FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS**

PaRC Full Council meetings will be held at the **Harrisburg Hilton** from 9:30 AM until 3:30 PM (unless otherwise noted). We will also have parking passes for those who park in the Strawberry Square Parking Garage. Please plan to stay for the entire meeting.

**August 5, 2020**  
**9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. ( See Above )**

**November 18, 2020**

The agenda will be posted on the PaRC website.

[http://parac.org/council\\_mtgs.html](http://parac.org/council_mtgs.html)

**PaRC Member Committee Conference Calls – Please Mark your Calendars**

**CareerLink/WIOA**

Next Call: To be Determined

**Executive Committee Conference Call**

Next Call: To be Determined

**Legislative and Public Awareness Conference Call**

Next Call: To be Determined

**OVR Policy and State Plan Committee / Customer Satisfaction Conference Call**

Next Call: To be Determined

## **Social Media/Outreach Committee Conference Call**

Next Call: To be Determined

## **Transition & Education**

Next Call: Friday October 9, 2020 at 2:00 PM

The PaRC Social Media and Outreach Committee in partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) produced 6 videos, 5 of which are OVR individual and business success stories, as well as a PaRC Recruitment video. We want to thank both the individuals and companies that participated in making these videos and OVR for supporting the project. The PaRC is pleased to present the following 6 videos. Please feel free to share.

[PaRC Recruitment](#)

[PaRC Aha Moment](#)

[PaRC Dream Partnership](#)

[PaRC Herr Foods Inc.](#)

[PaRC Keystone Blind Association](#)

[PaRC Assistive Technology](#)

**PaRC COUNCIL OPENINGS:** The PaRC is looking for candidates to fill new openings on the council. If interested, please go to our website ([www.parac.org](http://www.parac.org)) and fill out an application.

**1.)**

**Keep an Eye Out For The Upcoming Virtual Meeting for Drop-Ins!**

Hello!

We are a group of researchers who are interested in the ways people cope with mental health challenges. We are inviting you to participate in a survey about your experiences using Complementary and Alternative Medicine to help with your mental health recovery. Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) refers to health-promoting practices that are not part of the mainstream approaches typically used in Western medicine. These approaches include nutrition, exercise, energy healing, prayer, acupuncture, chiropractic, mindfulness or meditation, yoga, and vitamin supplements. These practices are complementary when used with traditional psychiatric medications and psychotherapy. They are alternative when used instead of such approaches. Often, these approaches are more consistent with certain cultural beliefs than conventionally offered, Western approaches. Your cultural beliefs and practices in the promotion of your recovery are also of great interest to us.

Our survey link takes you to our questions. It takes about fifteen minutes to complete once you enter.

We do not need your name. All you do is click on the survey link. We do not know your email, so there is no way we can identify you. When you click the link, you will find our study overview, assurance our research is approved by the East Stroudsburg University Human Subjects Review Board and contact information for the chair of the Human Subjects Review Board and one of the study investigators.

Your participation is 100 % anonymous and voluntary. You can simply stop answering the questions if you wish (though we would greatly appreciate it if you would try to answer everything). Thank you in advance, for considering responding to our survey. Just click on the link that follows this email!

Best wishes,

Laurene Clossey, Ph.D., LCSW

Professor, Sociology, Social Work & Criminal Justice - East  
Stroudsburg University

[lclossey@esu.edu](mailto:lclossey@esu.edu)

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/complementaryandalternativemedicineinmentalhealth>

## **2.) 'Disabled People Love Clothes Too'** **By Keah Brown July 26, 2020**

I have always believed that fashion is the window to the soul. As a Black disabled woman with cerebral palsy, a neurological disorder that affects movement on the right side of my body, I have gone through what I call the stages of fashion grief. To continue reading, go to: <https://mr-mag.com/disabled-people-love-clothes-too/>

## **3.) We are 20 Percent of America, and We're Still Invisible** **By Judith Heumann and John Wodatch** **July 26, 2020**

On July 26, 1990, President George Bush signed the Americans With Disabilities Act into law. Like the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the A.D.A. was watershed legislation, the culmination of a decades-long campaign of organized protest and activism. It, too, was a victory in the struggle for equality for a group of people who had been systematically denied basic rights and access to public spaces and services. On the 30th anniversary of the law, it is only natural to want to celebrate. And we should.

Yet just as many of the injustices that the Civil Rights Act aimed to eliminate are still very much with us, and still being resisted, the full promise of the Americans With Disabilities Act has yet to be realized. We are not yet where we need to be. To read more,

go to: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/26/opinion/Americans-with-disabilities-act.html>

#### **4.) Forwarded from Linda Williams**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 21, 2020**

### **Department of Aging Hosts Conversation, Seeks Public Input on its Draft Four-Year State Plan on Aging**

**Harrisburg, PA** – More than 200 people participated in the Pennsylvania Department of Aging’s Virtual Community Conversation to discuss the department’s State Plan on Aging for 2020-2024 and to provide feedback on strengthening aging services throughout the commonwealth. Those who attended the conversation included stakeholders, elected officials, and representatives from aging services providers. The department began with an overview of the goals, objectives, and strategies of the proposed state plan. Participants then heard testimony on the importance of supporting senior community centers, the need to address health disparities of older Pennsylvanians of color and in the LGBTQ community, the work of the Health Equity COVID-19 Response Team 65 and Older Task Force, suggestions on work to support individuals living with Alzheimer’s Disease and related disorders, preventive health services for seniors, social isolation among older Pennsylvanians and the importance of having broadband internet access across the entire commonwealth. Attendees also had a chance to submit questions in advance. “The Virtual Community Conversation allowed us to discuss the

development of our draft plan and to receive a variety of insight on how we can steer our State Plan on Aging for the next four years,” said Secretary of Aging Robert Torres. “This opportunity to engage with the public and community stakeholders has helped the Department obtain a greater assessment of the needs for older Pennsylvanians and how we can continue to prioritize them by creating a stronger, solid plan that will guide these efforts.” A draft of the State Plan on Aging is available on the department’s website [here](#) until Aug. 3 for the public to view and provide feedback. Prior to the conversation, the department sent out a brief survey that asked respondents to prioritize services and quality-of-life issues that are most meaningful to them in ensuring age-friendly communities across the commonwealth. The department received 5,600 responses from all 67 counties, with the biggest turnout from southeastern Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh metro area. Survey responses came in from a wide variety of stakeholder including veterans, people living with a disability, family/unpaid caregivers of older adults, grandparents raising grandchildren and members of the LGBTQ community. The State Plan on Aging is designed to help Pennsylvania meet the objectives of the Older Americans Act and will be submitted to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) containing a vision and direction for the delivery of Pennsylvania’s aging services over the next four years. The Department of Aging is required to submit a plan every four years, with the next plan commencing on Oct. 1, 2020. FYI – The Department of Aging’s draft State Plan on Aging is available on the department’s website until Aug. 3 for the public to view and provide feedback. Please see the below press release for more information, including the link to the draft plan. Comments can come from both organizations and individuals as long as they are received by next Monday August 3, 2020. Issues can be anything, including, but not limited to the types of concerns that PA SILC, PA DDC and DRP have heard in their sessions: transportation, housing, HCBS, employment, emergency preparedness, models of care (i.e., preference on social over medical models of care),

un/underserved populations (disability and aging) and others per your preference.

You can also see more Pennsylvania's State Plan on Aging for both past and present efforts:

<https://www.aging.pa.gov/publications/state-plan-on-aging/Pages/default.aspx>

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Jack Eilber: 717-214-7510  
or [jeilber@pa.gov](mailto:jeilber@pa.gov)

### **5.) Meet the blind piano player who's so good, scientists are studying him**

**July 26, 2020 CORRESPONDENT Sharyn Alfonsi**

Every so often, someone so young does something so amazing you cannot help but wonder - how do they do that? That is what happened the first time we heard Matthew Whitaker play piano. Matthew is a jazz pianist who is blind, and since the age of 11, he has been performing around the world. He has been called a prodigy and, as we noted when we first aired this story in February, his talent is so extraordinary. He is also caught the attention of scientists who are now studying his brain and trying to understand his vision of music. To read more, go to: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/matthew-whitaker-blind-jazz-pianist-18-years-old-60-minutes-2020-07-26/>

### **6.) Majority Of School Districts Not Accessible For Students With Disabilities** **by Michelle Diamant | July 27, 2020**

Thirty years after the Americans with Disabilities Act became law, most of the nation's public school districts remain inaccessible to students with disabilities, government investigators say. To continue reading, go to: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/07/27/majority-of->

[school-districts-not-accessible-for-students-with-disabilities/28661/](#)

**7.) State program for blind and visually impaired students continues in new format  
July 22, 2020**

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — A summer academy for Pennsylvania high school students who are blind or have other visual impairments was set for its sixth year on Penn State’s University Park campus this July until the coronavirus pandemic forced it to change course. But the state-run program still served students in need, with a virtual format and help from the University. To continue reading, go to:

<https://news.psu.edu/story/626365/2020/07/22/impact/state-program-blind-and-visually-impaired-students-continues-new>

**8.) Strangers Send Man With Down Syndrome Cards, Letters While He Awaits Transplant  
by Rita Giordano, The Philadelphia Inquirer/TNS | July 28, 2020**

PHILADELPHIA — Joe Eitl’s family always knew the day would come when he might need a heart transplant.

Joe, 37, was born with Down syndrome and cardiac defects; he has a hole in his heart and only one ventricle instead of the normal two. When he was a toddler, he underwent the first of many surgeries to improve his condition. Since then, he has undergone other open-heart procedures and catheterizations and has been treated with medications. But these have been stopgap measures, not cures, said his mother, Peg Eitl. To read more, go to:

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/07/28/strangers-down-syndrome-cards-letters-transplant/28665/>

## **9.) Braille trails: Helping visually impaired experience nature**

At age 11, Evan Barnard came across a vandalized Braille nature trail, one of the few places in his home state of Georgia where the visually impaired could comfortably explore the outdoors. As he began fixing up the trail and working with the Georgia Council of the Blind, Barnard promised to do whatever he could to help his new friends. A few years later, he created his own Braille trail. To read more, go to:

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/great-big-story/2020/07/24/great-big-story-braille-nature-trails-gbs.great-big-story>

## **10.) State of Mental Health in 2020 July 27, 2020**

Each year Mental Health Association National gathers data to help us understand the disparities faced by individuals with mental health problems. This year, Pennsylvania earned the number 1 rank in terms of lower prevalence of mental illness and higher rates of access to care. These rankings include both adult and youth measures. While we are pleased with the progress of Pennsylvania, there is always more we can do to improve outcomes, including improved access to health care and affordability of care. You can dig into the details on Pennsylvania here. To continue reading, go to:

<https://www.mhapa.org/state-of-mental-health-in-2020/>

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