



# ATLANTIC

CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2021 • VOL. 2



## From our ACIL family to yours...

As we head into the new year we hope you will join us at a support group or activity meeting. Having a support system, especially during the holidays, is important for our mental and emotional health.

Join in at any time or give us a call at (609)748-2253 ext. 4 for more information.

We wish you have a happy, healthy, holiday season!

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# Atlantic Center for Independent Living

160 S. PITNEY RD., UNITS 3 & 4, GALLOWAY, NJ 08205  
PHONE: (609)748-ABLE (2253) | ATLANTICCIL.ORG

## Our Mission

*Atlantic Center for Independent Living, Inc. is a center that assists individuals with disabilities to live and work as independently as possible.*

## Our core services include:

### Information & Referral

Information about & referrals to services and organizations that can help you achieve your independence.

### Advocacy

Staff assist individuals with personal issues to advocate for what they need. Systems advocacy identifies issues that affect others within the community and develop strategies to bring about systems change.

### Peer Support

We believe that individuals experiencing the same issues (peers) are in the best position to support one another dealing with similar experiences.

### Life Skills Training

Services are designed to assist you in gaining the skills necessary to live independently in your community.

### Transition Services

**Youth:** Our youth services provide support and guidance to students transitioning from school to adult life with a strong emphasis on employment.

**Seniors:** Atlantic staff can assist seniors living with disabilities to ensure they are receiving benefits and services designed to ensure the greatest independence possible with the goal of remaining within their communities.





## House Approves Largest Investment Ever In Community-Based Services

A roughly \$2 trillion bill including a historic investment in Medicaid home and community-based services and support for employment, housing and other disability programs is one step closer to becoming law. The U.S. House of Representatives voted 220 to 213 to approve the “Build Back Better Act” just before leaving for Thanksgiving.

The bill, which has been in the works for months, would inject \$150 billion into home and community-based services with any eye toward getting people with disabilities off of waiting lists and bolstering the workforce of direct support professionals who provide such services.

The plan also would allocate \$300 million to help facilitate the transition to competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities who are currently paid subminimum wage. It would make permanent a Medicaid program called Money Follows the Person that helps people with disabilities leave institutions for community-based settings. And, it includes \$160 million for special education teacher training as well as \$500 million for the Section 811 program that provides rental assistance for low-income people with disabilities.

Now the bill heads to the Senate where it’s likely to be hotly debated and could face changes. Disability advocates are already mobilizing their members to push lawmakers to act quickly on the measure.

Source: [Disability Scoop](#)

# Our Stories

Julio and Jorge Madrid are brothers and consumers of Atlantic CIL. Jorge was looking for help to support Julio in his job search. Together with their Independent Living Specialist, Marisa Douglas, they have been able to connect Julio with DVRS services.



Photo of Julio Madrid

DVRS stands for the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Any individual with a physical, mental, cognitive, or other form of disability who has a substantial impediment to employment may qualify for the following services through DVRS. Their mission is to enable eligible individuals with disabilities to achieve an employment outcome consistent with their strengths, priorities, needs, abilities, and capabilities.

Jorge explained, "It feels good to have the support and knowledge about the steps we need to take to reach our goals." Julio has work experience in the casino industry working as a Porter for many years. His disability led him to take a break for some time but he misses earning a living and is dedicated to getting back to work. In his spare time, Julio likes to watch movies, especially comedies and musicals. He also loves to sing and dance.



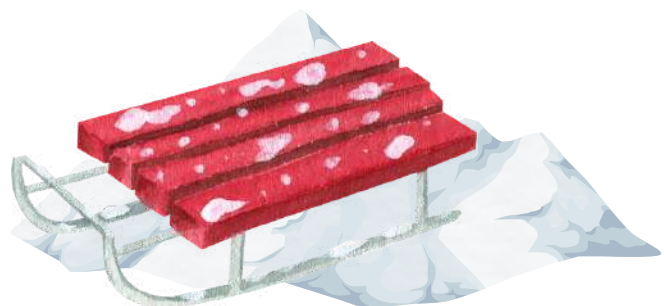
# What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive technology, or AT for short, is defined as “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a person with a disability.”

AT is frequently misunderstood, and many people don't know what classifies as AT. Many folks think AT is just an expensive device like a wheelchair but in reality, anything can be AT – it just depends on how it's utilized. Simply speaking – AT is any tool used to simplify someone's life. For example, if you are someone who has a mobility impairment and unable to get out of bed, you might ask Alexa to switch on the lights. In that situation, Alexa would become AT. Another example is if you need a few directions on how to go to a grocery store you might like to use GPS to assist with navigation. In that situation, GPS becomes AT. If you have a hearing impairment and turn on captions on your television, then the TV becomes AT. It is not AT if you only use these devices because you like and enjoy them. Any device may become AT if it removes a barrier for you.

If you still have questions about AT and want to find out how Disability Rights NJ can help, visit our website at [at4nj.org](http://at4nj.org)

Source: [Disability Rights NJ](http://DisabilityRightsNJ.org)



# ABLEnow Accounts

Need the perfect gift? ABLEnow contributions are a simple, practical solution for the holidays. It's the gift of independence and a thoughtful investment in health, financial security, and quality of life.

ABLEnow provides eligible individuals with disabilities a better way to save money for today's needs or invest for tomorrow.

ABLEnow accounts:

- Do not jeopardize eligibility for most benefit programs.
- Are tax-advantaged, so earnings grow tax free.
- Can accept contributions from anyone.
- Include online account management tools and a mobile app.

With no enrollment fee and no minimum contribution, you can open an account today. Visit [ABLEnow.com](https://www.ABLEnow.com)



## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Each year on December 3rd, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities promotes the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. The day raises awareness of the political, economic, social and cultural aspects disability affects people around the world.

If you have a disability or have been affected by it, share your story on social media. When doing so share it with [#InternationalDayOfPersonsWithDisabilities](https://www.instagram.com/InternationalDayOfPersonsWithDisabilities)

# Monthly Calendar



## December

**Weekly Activities**

- Sketch Book Club**  
Monday | 1pm | [Zoom Link](#)
- Life Skills Activities**  
Tuesday | 1pm | [Zoom Link](#)
- Current Events with Donald**  
Tuesday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)
- Chronic Pain & Illness Support Group**  
Wednesday | 1pm | [Zoom Link](#)
- Advocacy Group**  
Wednesday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)
- Socialization and Wellbeing Group**  
Friday | 11am | [Zoom Link](#)
- College Survival Club**  
Friday | 1pm | [Zoom Link](#)
- Building a Support Network**  
2nd Tuesday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)
- Communication Skills**  
3rd Thursday | 3pm | [Zoom Link](#)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Contact us for more information at [jburke@atlanticcil.org](mailto:jburke@atlanticcil.org) | (609)748-2253 ext. 4

## Support Groups

### BUILDING A SUPPORT NETWORK

2ND TUESDAYS AT 3:00PM

A monthly support group to discuss ways to build your support network.

Zoom ID #: 864 0593 0624  
Passcode: 206910



The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jennifer at [jburke@atlanticcil.org](mailto:jburke@atlanticcil.org) (609)748-2253 ext. 4






### CURRENT EVENTS

with Donald

Tuesdays @ 3pm

Zoom Meeting ID #: 832 3836 6293    Passcode: 955834

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### COMMUNICATION SKILLS SUPPORT GROUP

A MONTHLY DISCUSSION OF EFFECTIVE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE.

3RD THURSDAYS @ 3:00PM

Zoom ID #: 874 8523 8023    Passcode: 688079



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# Weekly Life Skills Activities



**HOLIDAY  
Card Making**

December 7, 2021 | 1:00 PM  
Zoom Meeting ID #: 811 7298 2370 | Passcode: 513838 | [Zoom Link](#)

LEARN HOW TO CREATE DIGITAL HOLIDAY CARDS TO EMAIL OR POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all. For accommodations please contact Jennifer at [jburke@atlanticcl.org](mailto:jburke@atlanticcl.org) (609)748-2253 ext.4

## Holiday Card Making

Tuesday, December 7, 2021 | 1pm

Learn how to make digital holiday cards that can be emailed or posted on social media. We will use a free design program and work together to learn how to use the program.



**2022 VISION BOARDS**

Let's visualize our goals for the new year!

2022 Goals

- First Goal
- The Second
- Next One
- Fourth Goal
- The Fifth
- Next One
- Sixth Goal

December 14, 2021  
1:00 PM  
Zoom ID: 811 7298 2370  
Passcode: 513838  
[Zoom Link](#)

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## 2022 Vision Boards

Tuesday, December 14, 2021 | 1pm

Visualize your 2022 goals!

We will use photos and list making techniques to prioritize our goals and create a visual representation of what we want to accomplish.



**Kitchen Safety:  
Holiday Cookies**

Let's bake cookies!  
We will explore how to safely navigate the kitchen while following a recipe. Have your favorite cookie recipe ready to bake along with us or come to learn more about kitchen safety!  
Email Jennifer for recipe ideas.

December 21, 2021 | 1:00 PM  
Zoom ID: 811 7298 2370 | Passcode: 513838  
[Zoom Link](#)

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## Kitchen Safety: Cookies

Tuesday, December 21, 2021 | 1pm

Baking holiday cookies is a tradition for many. Following a recipe requires use of many kitchen tools, appliances, and techniques. We will explore how to safely navigate the kitchen while baking.





## Collaboration Activity

# Sketch Book Club

Let's explore our creativity through art!  
Drawing is a fun and relaxing way to unwind.  
Join us for a new topic each week.  
Create a realistic or expressive drawing using  
any supplies you have handy.



**Mondays | 1:00 PM**  
**Zoom Meeting ID #: 838 5439 1536**  
**Passcode: 196590**

[Zoom Link](#)



**ATLANTIC**  
CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.



Mental Health  
Association  
in Atlantic County

The Atlantic Center for Independent Living supports equal access for all.  
For accommodations please contact Jennifer at [jburke@atlanticcil.org](mailto:jburke@atlanticcil.org) (609)748-2253 ext.4

# More from MHA



**Mental Health  
Association  
in Atlantic County**

## Balance & Body Image

Every 1st & 3rd Tuesday at 7pm

**A peer-led support group for adults living with or recovering from disordered eating**

Join us as we find support from others who have experienced disordered eating, learn about healthy coping skills to aid recovery, and work together to improve self-worth and self-esteem.

**Call/email for Zoom meeting information or join the virtual wellness center at no cost using this link:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>

609-652-3800  
Unitedbywellness@mhanj.org  
mhaac.info/ubw

THIS IS A GROUP OF UNITED BY WELLNESS: MHAJ'S VIRTUAL WELLNESS CENTER

Mental Health Association Atlantic County  
4 E Jimmie Leeds Rd. Ste. 8  
Galloway, NJ 08205  
Phone: 609-652-3800



*You're  
Invited!*



## **EXPRESSIONS**

A group focusing on your art and the process of creation!



1st & 3rd Thursday of each month  
7:30 pm - 8:30 pm



**Bring your hand created art and let's share and explore with each other!**



*What is Art?*



Poetry or Song lyrics you created, painting, drawing, pottery, crochet, knitting, weaving, photography, collage, multimedia art and so much more!

**Call/email for Zoom meeting information or join the virtual wellness center at no cost using this link:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>



609-652-3800

Unitedbywellness@mhanj.org

mhaac.info/ubw

This is a Group of United BY Wellness: MHAJ's Virtual Wellness Center

## Money Talks

Every 1st Wednesday  
7pm-8pm



Let's break the silence about our relationship with money and open up a new conversation!

Join us to discuss thought-provoking questions about money. In this supportive group there is no right or wrong, only understanding ourselves more deeply!

**Call/email for Zoom meeting information or join the virtual wellness center at no cost using this link:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8VXP2K8>



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