

# MICROBOARD AND SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORTS, USA

Wendy, Partridge, Editor

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## Got Dreams? By Lori Emory (Texas)

Nearly three months ago, my daughter, Andrea, had her first PATH party. Not yet 16 years old, she was very excited about having this party as the planning step and mission statement for her natural supports microboard. She and I worked out the details and found a place to hold her party. We went shopping for invitations, and with her insistence we bought two types...one for her friends and one for the adults. She helped format the invitations and personally put the

address label and stamp on each invitation that went out. She was excited! We were inviting a little over forty people and while I was nervous that they all might come, I was also hopeful that they would too.

The PATH started off typically with the dream sharing. Andrea's friends piped in with suggestions and even I learned things that my daughter wanted to do that I had no idea about. We, the family, were able to watch this all develop so nicely and knew that there were many people that cared for our daughter and were there to support her in all of her dreams.

As we progressed through the PATH, those in attendance were asked to "sign up" on the large sheet of paper if they were willing to support Andrea. Andrea was the first to sign, followed by a long line of people. In total, there are 29 people that have said they want to assist with everything from teaching Andrea how to cook turkey (so she can do that for our family this thanksgiving) to a group of girlfriends that agreed to help her plan her sweet Sixteen birthday party. Friends signed up to come to sleepovers and others sign up to ride bikes or take a first aid class

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## History of Microboards by Jackie Golden

Microboards, a concept originated out of British Columbia, is basically a provider for one person. The Microboard concept quickly caught on because it makes common sense. It provides accountability to the person needing supports and to the governments. The board of directors are dedicated to the focus person and care about the person's success. The directors

assure they are involved and see that supports are custom designed around the person's needs, desires and dreams. David Wetherow, originator of the concept, [www.communityworks.info](http://www.communityworks.info) has played an active role in its development. David has provided many hours of training here in the US so that the United States get the

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## Join our Yahoo Group!

Looking for a way to stay connected to what's happening on the national front? Contact Wendy Partridge at [wkpk@t6b.com](mailto:wkpk@t6b.com) and she'll add you to [NationalMicroboardsAssociation@yahoo.com](mailto:NationalMicroboardsAssociation@yahoo.com) Stay in touch with people who care about microboards in North America, Australia and beyond!

## Microboards Presented at 2009 International Conference on Self Determination

by Wendy Partridge

I was thrilled to speak at the International Conference on Self Determination to a packed room of people eager to learn about Microboards! I also had the pleasure of attending sessions that support our work. One of them was about a young man, Joe Jackson, who talked about it being “My life, It’s Now or Never” and his contributions to the community. A great framework on 8 Quality of Life Indicators was presented that helped us think about areas of: Emotional Well being, Interpersonal Relations; Material Well Being, Personal Development, Physical development, Self Determination, Social Inclusion and Human Rights.

Perhaps my favorite session was by Derrick Dufresne and Mike Mayer on “5 Star Quality” Following is a summary of their session:

For too long people with disabilities, regardless of the type of disability, have had to accept whatever was being offered as services. They had to fit their needs to the services available. This is not acceptable. We can

clearly do better.

What has been acceptable as “good” is not good enough. “Wonderful” should move to “great.” For almost 60 years, we have been at this business, with government –sponsored money, trying to move people from being clients to citizens. We have spent billions of dollars on programs to help people get outcomes that are often poorly defined, poorly measured, and mostly yield compliance rather than quality. We must move beyond old and non-functional definitions of quality.

*We cannot keep waiting for the “system” to define quality in a way that makes sense to us – that helps us have the life we want and deserve as people who experience disability – regardless of the type of disability.*

Wendy Partridge

Community Resource Alliance (CRA) partners Derrick Dufresne and Mike Mayer have developed a way to obtain a

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## Microboard and Microboard Association Design, Development and Implementation Featured Microboard: CuBBull, Inc. in Illinois

I am so grateful for the introduction to Microboards by the Illinois Association of Microboards and Cooperatives. It has changed our family’s life in just a few short months. In September of 2008, I heard about microboards and cooperatives for the first time from my PAS agent. I contacted Wendy Partridge and soon attended an informational session as well as the Tennessee Advanced Microboard Training in Murfreesboro, Tenn. There I heard what other persons with disabilities and their families were doing with employment, community living, recreation, networking, and just making their loved ones’ lives of more quality and substance. **My thought was I can do that too!** But the Microboard gave us the motivation and determination to get this done.

Our family has always been very involved in Bryan’s life and he has been living a good life in a CILA that is agency run. But sometimes that can change in a matter of a day, depending on who the House Manager is or the philosophy that is adopted by the Executive Director. I wanted more stability and sustainability for him when Gary and I are gone. And more importantly, we all wanted more control and self-direction of services as well as his home town community inclusion!



So, we started our Microboard with a PATH (Planning for Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) on,

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## IL Celebrates its Second Annual "Gathering"

Director of DHS' Office of Developmental Disabilities, Lilia Teninty and Sheila Romano, Director of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities encouraged audiences despite the threats of funding cuts, to continue to think creatively and have high expectations for a quality of life for Illinoisans with disabilities. They also reminded us to be a strong voice with decision makers of funding. Highlights of the conference included sessions for self advocates, on employment, fundraising and general guidance for developing cooperatives and microboards. One of the best parts of the Gathering was, "Sweet Beginnings" an

opportunity for attendees to meet with developing microboards and cooperatives, view their display boards, put together a recipe book, and sample delectable desserts! All in all, it was a delightful conference, check out [www.managingtheartofliving.org](http://www.managingtheartofliving.org) for next year's date!



## Summer Institute emphasizes Asset Based Community Development by Sheila Fisher

Inclusion's Summer Institute presented John McKnight from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois in a three day seminar on Asset Based Community Development. ABCD refers to seeking out the positives in any community or situation while looking for citizens with "gifts" rather than people to be "fixed." The ABCD method relies on a "connector" who is the community activist who knows those that will get involved and help spiral such an endeavor. Currently, most appropriate to microboards, ABCD has the Logan Square Project

going on in Chicago, which has adults, abled in their own ways, volunteering in every day settings including the Chicago Police Department, Norwegian American Hospital, and a local beauty parlor. The enthusiasm and dedication of those individuals as well as the great work ethics is a model for us to take back to our own communities in an endeavor to mobilize each local area to include everyone on an equal basis in their home setting. Another seminar Deepening the Practice of Asset Based Community Development will be presented on September 10 -12, 2009 in Chicago. More information about this seminar can be obtained at [www.abcdinstitute.org](http://www.abcdinstitute.org).

## Tennessee Microboard Association's Microconference 2009 a Success

A huge round of applause goes out to the Tennessee Microboard Association for hosting its THIRD annual conference!

Tricia Farnham inspired us to be CURIOUS, be BRAVE and be ENCOURAGING as we *Make Every Day Count*. She reminded us to challenge our assumptions, take a risk and ask to join in ordinary opportunities.

We received excellent materials and ideas for sound employee Management by Administrative Resources,

Inc.; Illinois and Iowa Microboard Associations talked about putting the fun back in fundraising; RaceCarWaterboy David Taylor, Jr. shared his story of achieving his dreams of owning and operating a water vending company at racing and other venues all over the region; A panel led by IA, IL, TX And GA shared our journey so far and where we're headed.

Microboards shared their passion, their philosophy and displayed their products.

## Got Dreams?

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with her. Ultimately what I found so rewarding about this process was that while I have always been close to my daughter and know her know her dreams, she was able to express them to so many people in a visual way that validates her dreams. Others now know what she wants and are willing to be part of this process.

In the past three months so many were involved with Andrea's PATH have become more active in her life. Andrea had FOUR sweet sixteen parties, has had numerous sleepovers, has been to lunch with friends, has been to the movies, has been shopping, has friends helping with Special Olympic swim team, and so much more. She is accepted now as a person that not only has dreams, but is working towards them in a very concrete way. She and I look at her PATH regularly to see if we are accomplishing what she set out to do, and the answer is yes!



For those of you that think this is not possible for your son or daughter, I say – Give it a try. Who knew there were so many people willing to support our daughter? All it took was an invitation!  
Lori Emory



## History of Microboards by Jackie Golden

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message and keeps the concept of the Microboard pure. The Administration on Developmental Disabilities granted an award through the project of national significance to Inclusion Research Institute with the Project Director being Jackie Golden. The grant deployed the concept of self directed support corporations and Microboards. At the same time Ms. Gold had already worked on and established a Microboard for her own son, the first of its kind in Maryland. Tennessee Microboard Association was born where Ruthie-Marie Beckwith, a national leader in the disability field recognized this was something she wanted to be part of. She quickly formed a record number of Microboards and a dynamic

Microboard Association. Another major contributor has been the Vela Microboard Association, also in British Columbia. They lead the way in teaching others to embrace the concept of a society that supports a person to be “of” their community, not simply live in their community.

Microboards are quickly spreading across the United States. The outcomes have been a higher quality of care, sustainable staff, cost effectiveness, and freedom for the person needing supports. Now it is time for a national effort, and collectively our state Microboard Associations and Microboards can work collectively on barriers and solutions for the amazing concept of Microboards and the freedom they bring.

## 2009 International Conference on Self Determination

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new, higher, level of quality. It is called 5-Star Quality. It means going beyond the best that is now identified as “traditional” services (3 Star). It means rethinking almost everything that is currently called “good” by people who have a vested interest in maintaining the current system. It means helping people have real, full lives of membership in their community and truly decreasing dependency on “the system”. It is going above this line that distinguishes the journey and helps people to practice citizenship, their birthright.

People who experience disabilities can facilitate, and should be able to expect, the quality that they deserve from those who are paid to support them in their lives. Satisfaction is not the same thing as quality. You may be satisfied with going to the dance – but most people would rather go with their favorite person to the dance. That is the beginning of thinking about 5-Star.

5-Star is a chance to raise the level of awareness of what real quality is – from the perspective of the person experiencing the disability and supports and services. 5-Star goes past “health and safety” to

what wellness really is. It goes past a simple acknowledgement of “my rights” to the expectation of exercising those rights – and the responsibilities that correspond to every right. This is also a great opportunity to empower people to lead themselves and others to a new standard of quality.

We cannot keep waiting for the “system” to define quality in a way that makes sense to us – that helps us have the life we want and deserve as people who experience disability – regardless of the type of disability. We must work to define quality and expect the system to change to meet this expectation. Why is this so important? People’s lives hang in the balance. That is why it is so important.

For more information about Five Star Quality, visit <http://www.craconferences.com/fivestar.html>

## Featured Microboard: CuBBull, Inc

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Bryan’s 32<sup>nd</sup> Birthday. What a wonderful experience for everyone involved. For the first time, Bryan participated and was very engaged in planning his future. We now had an individualized plan that was visual, had a timeline, was doable, and there were 13 other Board of Directors that cared for and loved Bryan who were accountable to each other to make this dream come to fruition. It was a very simple process with the help of the Illinois Association of Microboards and Cooperatives to become incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation called CuBBull, Inc. The name and logo are Bryan’s life – He is an avid Cubs fan and loves the Bulls; the BB in the middle is Bryan Barnhart; and the logo has a TV around the BB which is how he loves to spend his time. And we were off and running!

Bryan started his own company because of the PATH and with the help of the Board of Directors – CuBBull Services Company – a vending machine business at the local golf courses is doing business. He is soon to add the fire station. I have never seen him so motivated to

get up and fill these vending machines with his favorite Coke products. He has also learned through this by: he opened his own company bank account; he counts the money; he, with the aid of the staff, makes out a deposit slip; and he pays his bill at the Coke Bottling Company who delivers his supplies to him. The Board of Directors has also written a CILA application which was sent for approval and has formed a committee to search for a home. Bryan, through the PATH, desires to move back to his home town community in a home of his own like his sister and brother; to be near his family; to attend sporting events of his nephews and the home town teams; to acquire more vending machines in an area where the business community has known him all of his life; to be a part of the sports booster club; to have a dog in a home of his own; to spend time with his 84 year old grandfather; and to grow old in a community where he has family and friend support. The CuBBull, Inc (Microboard) Board of Directors will make these dreams come true because they are focused on the needs of and love this one person, Bryan Matthew Barnhart. And I can be assured that when I am gone my son will live a quality and productive life. I have always put things off until tomorrow. I have learned the time to act is now. I wish I would have done this earlier for Bryan. If you are interested, you can do this, just

# Call for Nominations for At-Large Members

In keeping with the By-laws as adopted by the Steering Committee of Microboards and Self-Directed Supports USA (MSSUSA) on May 6, 2009, the Steering Committee is seeking nominations for election to the founding board of directors as follows:

1. Three at-large members from regions where no state association exists. Contact Ruthie Marie Beckwith for region information.
2. Two individuals who are focus persons of an individual microboard

All nominees must be a member or focus person of an existing microboard.

Initial terms will be 1-3 years as determined by the board of directors with reelection as provided for in the by-laws.

At-large members will be voted upon by the representatives of the state associations.

The National Steering Committee is extending its deadline for nominations for election of at-large members to the founding board of directors of Microboards and Self-Directed Supports, USA to August 31st, 2009.

**If you have been appointed by your state microboards association or self directed supports organization, please fill this out as well.**

Our meetings are done by conference calls. We hope to have one in person meeting in March of 2010 in Tennessee. If you are not sure you qualify, please email Ruthie and ask!

## Call for Nominations

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a (Check one): \_\_\_\_\_ Focus person of a microboard \_\_\_\_\_ Board member of a microboard

Name of Microboard: \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a brief paragraph on why you want to be a national board member:

**Return form via fax or email to: Election Committee, MSSUSA, (615) 904-0308 or [empfanatic@aol.com](mailto:empfanatic@aol.com)**

**Stay tuned! Our next edition will update you on what's happening in Pennsylvania and California!**