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UPCOMING DB CAN NJ EVENTS Classic Bingo 10:30 a.m. Sep 4

Register by email: dbcannj@gmail.com

Sep 50/50 Tickets on Sale Soon \$5/each or 5/\$20

Maybe you'll win the Jack O' Lantern Jackpot!

Classic Bingo 10:30 a.m. Oct 2

Register by email: dbcannj@gmail.com **Halloween Event**

Nov Holidays Fundraiser: Pasta, Paws & Popcorn

DB CAN NJ aims to grow and share our beautiful community. In this edition of our newsletter, we highlight the creative ways we've been doing that

through a pandemic that has continued to isolate us all. We hope you'll smile as you remember these events and the friends who joined us along the way. Be sure to stay tuned because there's definitely more to come!







2021 Celebration of DeafBlind Awareness Early in 2021, DB CAN NJ polled our community to determine how we



clear: 1) Show the larger community that with accessibility, deafblind people can participate in whatever their heart desires, and 2) celebrate these accomplishments. With these goals in mind, we set to work. First, we again led the effort of 17 organizations in asking NJ Governor Phil Murphy to proclaim the last week of June 2021 as Helen Keller DeafBlind Awareness Week.

Also in June, on the 25th, the DeafBlind League of New Jersey joined us in sponsoring *This Is Us!*, our kickoff celebration of DeafBlind Awareness Week. Deafblind people were actively involved as planners, accessibility evaluators and event presenters. The event included an interview of Doug Roland by our

deafblind community, the premiere of our This Is Me! video, trivia and chat rooms. Heartfelt thanks to 22 of our deafblind friends who shared their beautiful presence in the video. Attendance at the kickoff event numbered more than 60 people from 10 states: CA, DE, FL, GA, LA, NJ, NY, PA, TX and VA! Events like these happen only through the collaborative efforts of many. We're grateful to these 22 individuals who made our events possible: the creative, technical and production teams (Andrew, Brian, Jennifer, Joe, Kathy, Marci, Mark, Nick, Sherel and Solee), the Access Team (Alice, Anne, Jon and Tara); all the presenters and hosts (Alice, Anne, Barbara, Bernice, Betsy, Chrissie, Doug, Fonda, Jon, Mark, Nick, Patrick,



Serena and Tamilah); and DBLNJ for their financial support of the *This Is Us!* event. What's the DB CAN NJ Access Team? The Access - or "A" - Team is DB CAN NJ's group of deafblind people who advise us on accessibility. They

online events and trainings and to offer guidance and assistance to other groups as well. The A Team is an example of how we work to fulfill our mission of For DeafBlind, By DeafBlind. To learn if the DB CAN NJ

SSP White Paper Published, Trustees on Writing Team Board President Kathy Gabry and Vice President Mark Gasaway are two of the six authors of a new white paper, "Deafblind People and Support Service Providers in the 21st Century." A white paper is an authoritative, researched and in-depth report on a topic or an issue. This white paper was published in June 2021 after nearly 4 years of research. It presents a comprehensive overview of the history, philosophy and use of support service providers (SSPs).

The writing team included three deafblind and three hearing/sighted people, all with extensive SSP experience as consumers or providers. In addition to Kathy and Mark, the writers are Paul Deeming, DeafBlind Services Minnesota; Beth Jordan, Helen Keller National Center Regional Rep; deafblind advocate Randy

The paper is available at https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/Support-Service-Provider-White-Paper/ **Kudos to Easterseals!**

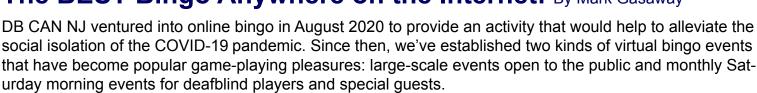
Last winter Easterseals approached us to present two workshops to their job coaches, similar to what we did in September 2019, but with one big difference: The workshops would be presented virtually. We know

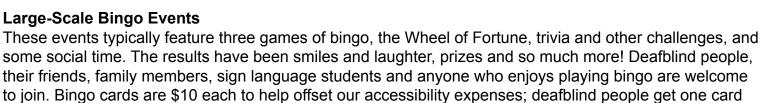
Reaching deafblind people virtually

nication in an online world and strategies to effect successful virtual communication. The workshop included a 3-person panel and realtime interactions with deafblind people who use a variety of communication methods and technologies. DeafBlind Technology introduced various technologies used by deafblind people and featured demonstrations led by six deafblind present-

• Welcome to the Virtual DeafBlind World! explored deafblind commu-

ers of how technology empowers their vocational and daily lives.





trainings to ensure that our deafblind players had accessibility to Zoom. We were encouraged to play again by the 36 attendees from NJ, NY, FL and GA who told us Carnival Bingo was awesome, engaging, excellent, fabulous, fantastic, fun, great, and necessary. Kathy and Sherel continued the Zoom trainings prior to Halloween Bingo. At that event, many of the 57 attendees from throughout the East Coast were in costume, just like ILLY the Clown, who continued as the ball drawer. Halloween Bingo satisfaction surveys told us that 94% would attend another event.

free. Accessibility includes ASL interpreting, relaxed pace interpreting, captions, communication facilitators (in NJ and NYC only) and a technology specialist. The cost of these accommodations is about \$1,200 per

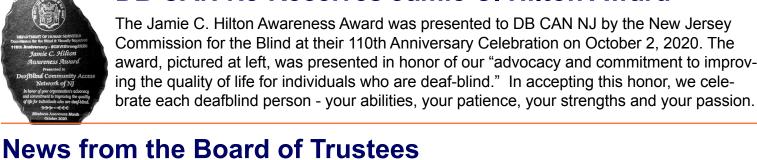
Carnival Bingo with ILLY the Clown as the ball drawer was our first event. Prior to the event, Board President Kathy Gabry and Public Relations Chair Sherel Beslanovitz hosted group and 1:1 Zoom

37 46

Our first fundraiser launched on Black Friday 2020: Masks! Masks! Our friends David and Nathalie at the French Fix in Red Bank, NJ sewed all the masks and donated half of them to our cause. Our masks are cool because they have behind-

the-head elastic that doesn't bother hearing aids, CIs or glasses, and all the fabric is custom art! Three of the masks were designed by New Jersey artist Jon Gabry. In the end, we sold 146 masks and made a profit of \$1,200. Thank you to everyone who supported us! Wear your masks in good health, and if you're looking for some new designs, check out David and Nathalie's store at: https://www.frenchfixllc.com/

Masks Fundraiser - A Success!



Classic Bingo

DB CAN NJ Receives Jamie C. Hilton Award The Jamie C. Hilton Awareness Award was presented to DB CAN NJ by the New Jersey Commission for the Blind at their 110th Anniversary Celebration on October 2, 2020. The award, pictured at left, was presented in honor of our "advocacy and commitment to improv-

 We're proud to announce the appointment of Nick Pallessi, Treasurer, and Natalie Roca, Trustee, to the DB CAN NJ Board of Trustees. Check out their bios at: https://www.dbcannj.org/meet-our-board DB CAN NJ is supporting two bills in the NJ State Legislature: A5517 Parental Rights and A4856/ S3904 Accessibility of School Websites. Parental Rights provides for the protection of the custody and visitation rights of parents with a disability, so that a child cannot be taken away from a parent just

The budget for each Zoom event is about \$1,200, with most of the costs for interpreters, communication facilitators, a technology specialist and a captionist. Please consider supporting our 50/50 and our fundraisers this fall as all funds raised go toward these expenses. July 22 was our 5th birthday! Five years is usually the marker to determine whether an organization will make it ... or not. We were growing right along ... until COVID-19 walloped everyone. We've stayed strong, thanks to the courage and creativity of our board and all who have believed in us. Thank you!

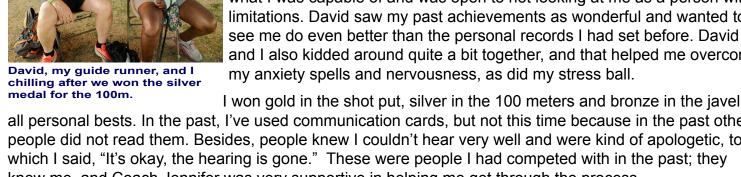
Doesn't it make you crazy when you draw down that Visa gift card and there's \$3.14 left? What're you gonna do with that? Donate those few bucks to your favorite charity: DB CAN NJ! Go to dbcannj.org/donate and click on Donate using PayPal. When PayPal comes up, in the number space, type the balance on the card, and then click on the bottom button: Donate with a Debit or Credit Card. When the next screen comes up, complete all the card and cardholder

Inspiration Corner: Alice is "Back on Track" By Alice Eaddy as told to Mark Gasaway The track and field activities/sports at the Arizona Desert Challenge Games in May were my first such event since the COVID-19 pandemic. Participat-

information. Hit enter. That's all there is to it. Your card is now completely used ... and for a great cause!

David and I had practiced only about three times together, but he knew what I was capable of and was open to not looking at me as a person with limitations. David saw my past achievements as wonderful and wanted to

Donate Your Leftovers!



and I also kidded around quite a bit together, and that helped me overcome my anxiety spells and nervousness, as did my stress ball. I won gold in the shot put, silver in the 100 meters and bronze in the javelin, all personal bests. In the past, I've used communication cards, but not this time because in the past other people did not read them. Besides, people knew I couldn't hear very well and were kind of apologetic, to which I said, "It's okay, the hearing is gone." These were people I had competed with in the past; they knew me, and Coach Jennifer was very supportive in helping me get through the process.

DB-CAN-NJ

should best promote deafblind awareness this year. The response was

Oct 29

In May, we hosted an accessible virtual screening for deafblind people of the Oscar-nominated short film Feeling Through. The film's producer, Doug Roland, joined us and answered questions from the audience. The feedback was so positive that we scheduled an encore performance for the general public in June.

share their expertise on the variety of high- and low-tech devices, apps and other accommodations that they use in their daily lives. Their perspectives enlighten us as to how to make our programs and events possible; if a process, plan or idea is accessible to all; or if we've missed the boat altogether and need to head back to the drawing board ... with their help and suggestions. Their insights allow us to provide accessible

A Team might be able to offer accessibility expertise to your organization, email dbcanni@gmail.com.

Pope; and DeafBlind Services Program Director for the State of Virginia Elizabeth Spiers.

the training experience is more personal, thorough and engaging in person, but COVID-19 has crimped that style. After consideration of Easterseals' goals, we developed two half-day workshops:

The attendees reported that the workshops increased their knowledge of both topics and their confidence in finding creative solutions to working and communicating with deafblind people in a virtual world. Bravo to Easterseals for striving to better understand their deafblind consumers! The BEST Bingo Anywhere on the Internet! By Mark Gasaway

event, and we're grateful that the DeafBlind League of New Jersey has co-sponsored several events with us and that some of our accessibility providers have donated some or all of their time. SSPNJ has also supported the events with remote SSPs for those who access by phone. Here are some highlights:

By the time Valentine's Day Bingo rolled around, we were confident that we were providing the best virtual bingo of any organization anywhere! The 46 attendees agreed: 100% of those completing the satisfaction survey said they'd come to another event.

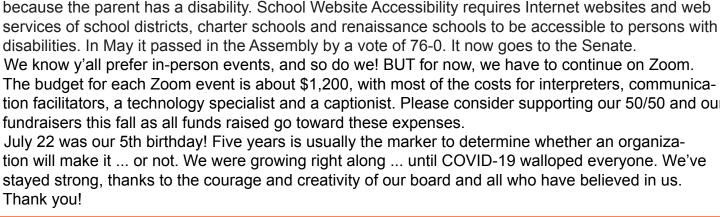
In December 2020, at the request of deafblind people, we began hosting bingo on Saturdays, once a

Bingo to life: ILLY the Clown, the interpreters, the assistants and the communication facilitators.

To join any of our bingo events, please email dbcannj@gmail.com or mark.gasaway@comcast.net

month, for deafblind players and special guests. The games are free to all and are relaxed and casual. We cheer each other on – the more BINGOS!, the merrier! We're thankful to all our volunteers who bring Classic

G46 53 NEXT GAME: FULL OF IT

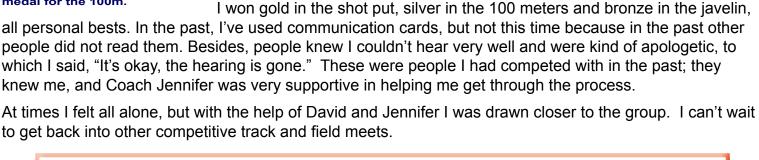


Gift Cara

Masks! Masks! 🥦

FABRIC CHOICES

ing in the games meant a great deal to me, and I was super excited to be back doing what I love and with David B., my first personal guide runner.



We're a grassroots effort that aims to be truly responsive to the needs of the deafblind community. Everyone who cares about and believes in our AWESOME community is welcome to join our training, networking, social, and recreational events.

dbcannj.org dbcannj@gmail.com