

2008 GOPEN MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

—Change the system for people with developmental disabilities—

Co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Network:

- *Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC)*
- *Institute for Community Inclusion, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (ICI)*
- *Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities*
- *Disability Law Center*

What is the Gopen Fellowship?

Barbara Wilensky Gopen was a person with a disability who made a lifetime commitment to advocating on behalf of people with developmental disabilities. Founded in 2001, this fellowship offers an individual with a developmental disability or family member a unique opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and experience by working with members of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Network programs. The fellow will design and implement a project of their choice to gain expertise in their field of interest. The one-year award includes a stipend of \$20,000 plus benefits.

The fellowship offers an educational and supportive environment designed for an individual who has extensive volunteer advocacy experience to start working in the professional disability advocacy field. As fellows develop their work plan, choose their project design, and research and create their final product, they mentored by ICI and MDDC staff to develop the skills they need, understand how the system works, and learn how they can create change.

Who is eligible?

The Barbara Wilensky Gopen Memorial Fellowship is open to any **INDIVIDUAL WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY** or **FAMILY MEMBER** who wants to enhance their knowledge and skills in the developmental disabilities field. Gopen fellowship applicants may have disability or advocacy experience on a personal or volunteer level, but they do not need to have extensive professional experience in the disability field.

What have past fellows accomplished?

- 2007 – Shannon McCue (self-advocate, current fellow)
Currently researching and developing a guide to accessible Community Technology Centers
- 2006 - Elisabetta Costantini (parent)
Researched and developed integrated recreational opportunities for teens and young adults with disabilities.
- 2005 - John Anton (self-advocate)
Developed a legislative advocacy workshop for self-advocates
- 2004 - Donna Kulpa (parent)
Wrote a guide to accessible transportation in southeastern Massachusetts
- 2003 - Rebecca Goniwich (parent)
Created a workshop on Positive Behavior Supports for teachers and parents
- 2002 - Evelyne Milorin (parent)
Developed an informational audio and video tape for the Haitian community
- 2001 - Sandy Houghton (parent and self-advocate)
Developed a leadership curriculum for self-advocates

Basic requirements for the Barbara Wilensky Gopen Fellowship

- Make a minimum commitment of 20 hours per week for a period of 12 months.
- Work at least two days per week at ICI in Boston.
- Participate in training and other leadership activities at ICI.
- Give a presentation upon the conclusion of the fellowship at the MDDC's December 2008 quarterly meeting.
- If appropriate, give a presentation at a regional or national meeting (meeting to be determined) in conjunction with other individuals or colleagues (paper, poster, or verbal presentation).

Timeline

Late August 2007:	Application period begins
October 12:	Applications due
November 2:	Applicants notified of finalist status
Week of November 12:	Finalist interviews
November 20:	Finalists notified of committee's decision
January 1, 2008:	Fellowship begins

How do I apply?

Applications for the 2008 fellowship **must be received by 5:00 pm on Friday, October 12, 2007.**

Applicants must submit a brief written proposal (2-3 pages) of a project or study activity, a resume, and three letters of reference. The proposal should include a brief description of (1) the applicant's personal disability experience, (2) the proposed project, including reasoning for addressing the chosen topic (3) project goal, objectives and projected accomplishments, and (4) the applicant's vision for their post-fellowship role in disability advocacy.

ICI staff can offer assistance to develop these application materials. Applicants will be judged on the originality of their proposed project and their potential to benefit from the fellowship experience. The review committee will interview all finalists. The recipient of the 2008 Gopen Fellowship will be announced in late November.

Please send applications to:

Attention: David T. Helm, Ph.D.
Institute for Community Inclusion
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125
david.helm@childrens.harvard.edu

For more information please contact:

David Helm at ICI
857-218-4327 (voice)
david.helm@childrens.harvard.edu

This information is also posted on the ICI website (www.communityinclusion.org) and the Council website (www.mass.gov/mddc).