

Fall 2013

# The Link

TotalLink2 Community  
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TotalLink2.org

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## OUR VISION

TotalLink2 Community's vision is to realize a fully-inclusive community that values, accepts, and respects the abilities, talents, and rights of each and every person.

### Highlight: Jill Young, Job Coach and Social Programs Coordinator

Other than 3 years in Kansas City, Missouri, Jill Young has lived in Northbrook, Illinois, for more than 18 years. She is married and has 3 children (ages 20, 17, and 10). Jill was a teacher in Chicago's inner city for 10 years before deciding to start her own family. Jill's kids were her first priority and, fortunately, with them. She continued to be active in the community, getting involved with enrichment programs, and teaching part-time at the kindergarten and preschool levels. Jill's eldest daughter became very involved in volunteering her time with people with special needs, after entering High School at GBN. Jill's daughter often brought the people she volunteered with home, and Jill found out that she, too wanted to get involved. Jill began her work with TL2C as a volunteer, then hired as a Job Coach and now is also the Social Programs Coordinator. She loves working with the young adults she has met thus far and is really looking forward to meeting all of you!



Jill Young

## Better Connections. Better Community.

We are very excited to announce that TL2C received a unique contract from the Department of Rehab Services (DRS) to use the Customized Employment (CE) model. The contract enables individuals with open cases to use state funding to go through the CE process with TotalLink! TL2C is very proud of this partnership with DRS as it allows us to expand our client base and to sustain our work. This contract is a clear example of Illinois's support of the Employment First movement.



## Getting Into the Action Team

Thanks to everyone who joined us Wednesday, October 16th, at the Northbrook Civic Center for our latest Community Action Team (CAT) meeting. We heard from two job seekers: Matthew Maltz and Trevor Rodgers. Matthew shared the great news that he had been offered a job that very day at SNAP Diagnostics, a Wheeling-based private medical device and service company dedicated to improving the diagnosis of sleep-related breathing disorders. We are very, very excited for both Matthew and for SNAP Diagnostics! After Matthew shared his news, Trevor followed up with a wonderful PowerPoint presentation about himself to help the group get a sense of who he is and of what kinds of things he likes. The group then brainstormed job ideas and businesses to explore for informational tours that might be a good match for Trevor's strengths, skills, talents and gifts! We had a great turnout and a lot of really good ideas were brought to the table.

Community Action Team usually meets the third Wednesday of every month -- 7 PM at the Northbrook Civic Center (2002 Walters Ave, Northbrook). Please feel free to invite your friends, neighbors, community members, and business associates; having a diverse group to brainstorm really fortifies the creativity of the whole process. Stay tuned for more details on the next meeting!

TotalLink2 is now a  
501(c)3 tax exempt  
organization.

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## WIN:WIN



After meeting with Jim Jennings and a couple of other Jennings Chevrolet employees, Chris Pullman was hired on the *spot* for his unique ability to attend to detail and complete errorless work. He began his career at Jennings Chevrolet in late May 2013, working for two hours three days a week. After little more than a month Jennings rewarded Chris' competency and great work ethic by asking Chris

**"...he works very hard and takes pride at what he does."**

if he wanted to work more hours. He now works for two hours *five* days a week and walks (yes, *walks*) to and from work!! When Chris was asked about his job he said, "I like my job because I get to work at Jennings and it is a nice place!" During his work shift, Chris is responsible for disassembling car service reports that need to be divided by department: accounts payable and customer records. Chris also files in the business department using a 4-digit system that requires documents to be in ascending numerical order. Additionally, Chris shreds and wipes down the cars in the show room. Chris stated, "I like my job because I can do it well!" Chris's co-workers are happy to have him on the team. Regina Faktorovich, his supervisor, said, "Chris is really enjoying working at Jennings. He mastered all his tasks and he works very hard and takes pride at what he does. We really enjoying having him around! I think he feels

**"I like my job because I can do it well."**

very comfortable here at Jennings and his favorite car is the Beetle Convertible!" Chris's parents couldn't be more thrilled. They stated, "Our Dreams Realized – Chris is working in a very supportive vocational environment where he does a variety of different tasks that align with his strengths and meet his needs for consistency, organization, and repetition. We've seen noticeable improvement in his general functioning and greater independence since working. He's definitely very happy and feeling good about himself."

**Sarah Weinstein:** Lets celebrate with Sarah Weinstein!!! When Sarah began at Abt Electronics, in mid-August, she started with 6 hours per week. By late September, Sarah expressed to her dad she wanted to meet with Jennifer, head of HR, to ask for more hours. Jill, Sarah's job coach, helped Sarah meet with Jennifer and Sarah nailed advocating for herself! Jennifer approved for Sarah to work 9 hours per week because she saw how helpful Sarah was to the service department and the security team! Two days per week, Sarah helps sort service tickets and one day per week Sarah assists customers at the merchandise pick up counter and helps scan boxes needing to be shipped out. Sarah's parents said, "We're thrilled for Sarah!" Sarah is now working on her own with the job coach doing once a week check-ins! Sarah has successfully built relationships to naturally support her in her job and has started eating lunch in the staff cafeteria. Sarah said, "This is just like the show *The Office*. The phone is like *The Office*, my desk is like *The Office*, and the cafeteria is just like *The Office*."



## Checking In With...

**Daniel Eichengreen:** Daniel at Spatz's Management where he is office administrator. Sonya shared the office was always behind on filing and could use an extra set of hands opening mail and preparing bills for the mail. These tasks matched Daniel's skill-set and strengths perfectly! Jerry, Daniel's mother said, "Daniel is most happy when he has a job. he craves structure." Daniel's natural knack for numbers gives him an advantage when filing and paying bills. He is also very gifted at attending to detail, and he uses this skill when matching checks with bills and preparing a bill's envelope for the mail. Daniel says, "My job is awesome! I separate statements and bills and then I file them by month. I would like to work more hours or an additional day. I like working and earning money." Daniel is learning new things as well – how to read bank statements and insurance forms, what paying bills entails, and how to keep his workspace organized to produce optimal work! Sonya has expressed how lucky Spatz's Management is to have hired Daniel, as it helps her

**"Daniel's natural knack for numbers gives him an advantage when filing and paying bills."**

to attend to other things around the office. When asked what his favorite part of the week is, Daniel responded, "the paycheck!" Bill, Daniel's father revealed, "to keep him motivated, Daniel is paid every week. Reports from Sonya indicate he is doing a good job and they are very pleased." Congratulations to Daniel, and a warm thank-you to everyone who played a role in his success!

successfully landed his second job a huge help to Sonya Stay, the



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## TL2C Spotlight: Sam Becker



Total Link has recently started with a new job seeker, Sam Becker! Sam is an expert game blogger and has his own website! We'd like to invite everyone to check out Sam's blog at [www.graysreviews.blogspot.com](http://www.graysreviews.blogspot.com). A lot of video games are being released this month, so visit Sam's blog to read his reviews and suggestions. As we have started the Discovery process with Sam, we've learned he has earned an undergraduate degree in Communication from Southern Illinois, has a passion for gaming, and is a very creative writer. We will continue to learn about Sam's other areas of interest and will further explore connections that the community may have in the gaming industry. Sam is very excited for his blogging audience to grow -- please check out his site, read his reviews, and let him know what you think!

### Bingo Game Night:

On Friday, November 1st, The Weinstens hosted a TL2C Bingo Games Night at their home in Northbrook. Participants brought their favorite dishes and recipes to share for a pot-luck dinner before the games began, after which a wild, fun night of Bingo ensued. There were plenty of prizes won, and lots of participants, both new and old, to meet and to catch up with. Overall everyone had a really great time, and we are all excited for the next Total Link2 Community social event!



On November 13th TL2C's Joan Martin and Emily Raming shared all of Total Link's success in the *Everyone Works!* Initiative in a presentation at the Illinois Association of Microboards and Cooperatives (IAMC), "aimed at helping people with disabilities live the lives they want to live, with the support of family, friends, community and public resources. The project offers self-advocates, families and friends the opportunity to create Microboards and Human Service Cooperatives, consumer-governed structures that bring resources, authority and responsibility directly into the hands of the people whose lives are most affected by the way support services are organized." Sources and more detailed information about IAMC can be found at the event [website](#).

## How Did It Go?!

**SPEAK UP AND  
SPEAK OUT**  
**summit**

Janice Weinstein and Emily Raming attended SUSO for the first time. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet our state's self advocates and to hear firsthand from Governor Quinn about his full-fledged support of inclusive employment and community living. We had an energetic and engaging crowd attend our session on the *Everyone Works!* Project. A few key highlights for Total Link2 Community: Jessi & Brian Martin take advantage of a great photo opp with Governor Quinn, the Super Hero Dance was rockin' and we left the conference on a high note after hearing Tim Harris who has Down Syndrome talk about his journey to restaurant ownership. We can't wait to go back next year!



## Current Connections

Thank you to Maureen and Rob Kogen for hosting our July Fundraiser, *Sip & Celebrate* -- We would also like to thank all of our guests and donors who Lit up the Night with their extra donations to support all of TL2C's current initiatives. We raised over \$6,000 and everyone enjoyed a beautiful evening at the Kogen's home!

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## Save the Date!



**December 11, 2013: TASH Conference (Equity, Opportunity and Inclusion for People with Disabilities)** — District 225 Director of Special Education Services Jennifer Pearson and TotalLink Project Administrator Janice Weinstein will be speaking at the TASH 2013 Conference.

Shop for a Cause!

at Elyse Fisher's

*Accessorize  
Me*



20% of all sales will be donated to  
Total Link2 Community

Join us for light appetizers & drinks.

Bring your holiday shopping list and friends.

Thursday, November 21, 7:00-9:00 pm.

Location: 168 Estate Drive, Deerfield, Illinois.

RSVP: [drjaniceweinstein@gmail.com](mailto:drjaniceweinstein@gmail.com)