



## Southern Wisconsin Action Network For Disability Rights

A PROJECT OF:



Access to Independence **advocates** and **educates** to **support** and **empower** people with disabilities.

Access To Independence  
Grass roots Organizer  
301 S. Livingston - Suite 200  
Madison, WI 53703

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## What is ActionNet?

ActionNet is a network that will allow for people in **Columbia, Dane, Dodge, and Green** counties to stay connected and learn about local state and federal issues that impact people with disabilities in their area. It will be made up of county grassroots groups with different roles for members, and information will be shared with members in a variety of ways. ActionNet will keep the local groups and their members informed of what other groups are doing, give them the opportunity to share ideas, and build a stronger coalition to address issues they identify in their communities.

**As part of ActionNet, you will be a part of a growing network of grassroots groups, both locally and statewide. This network gives people the ability to join others who care about disability issues to be a powerful force for change.**

### WHAT ARE LOCAL GRASSROOTS GROUPS?

Grassroots groups are made up of every day citizens who want to take action to solve issues facing their community. As a person who is passionate about disability rights, you are already tied into a long history of grassroots efforts that have paved the way for many of the services that are available today. This is important because often times, people with disabilities are excluded from the decisions affecting their lives, and grassroots involvement is a way for people to gain more control, and have influence in decisions.

## WHAT CAN GRASSROOTS GROUPS DO?

Grassroots Groups can work together to identify local issues most important to its members and communities. Groups work to address these issues in a number of ways, including educating the public and policy makers, building community partnerships, and drawing media support for issues facing the community. Through community organizing individuals gain the skills and knowledge to understand their rights, recognize power within themselves, and use community resources and connections to make change.

As part of a Grassroots Group, you will be supported by the Grassroots Coordinator at Access to Independence to develop your skills as an advocate for yourself and others. The Grassroots Coordinator will work with regional contacts and members of the groups to identify issues in the community, learn valuable leadership skills, and strengthen the network. It is also the coordinator's job to ensure that groups receive information and alerts in time to act on it, and to make sure that the information is accurate.

**“We must remember that one determined person can make a significant difference, and that a small group of determined people can change the course of history.”**

**-Sonia Johnson**

## How to get involved

There are a number of ways to get involved in the ActionNet.

### You can

- Mail in the tear off portion of this brochure
- Visit our website to get more information about important issues and to sign up to be part of the network.
- Stop in and talk to the grassroots coordinator who will be visiting Community locations in **Columbia, Dane, Dodge, and Green Counties.**

You can call the Access to Independence office to find out where the grassroots coordinator will be, and when we have office hours in your county.



If you need an interpreter, materials in alternative formats or other accommodations to access any of our programs, services, or activities, please contact me at least 72 hours before the services are needed so proper arrangements can be made. Thank you.

## A Role for Everyone in ActionNet!

Although Access to Independence works primarily with people with disabilities, people with and without disabilities are encouraged to join their local group and be a part of ActionNet. ActionNet is a place for you to learn new skills and get involved at a level you're comfortable with. Involvement in ActionNet is based on levels of commitment that give people a wide choice of ways to get connected and become involved in their communities. These levels are based on the amount of action you wish to take, and offers the chance to become more involved in the issues you find important.

### **LEVELS OF COMMITMENT**

#### **Partner**

Unsure about whether or not advocacy is for you? Become a partner and learn about the issues facing the disability community as a whole. From your neighborhood all the way to the White House people with disabilities face issues on many levels. With more information, you may find something interesting to voice your opinion about. It is also important to share information with people outside the network such as friends, family, or coworkers.

**Anyone and everyone in the network is a partner.**

#### **Advocate**

Advocates are the voice of ActionNet. Advocates let public officials, business owners, as well as other people with disabilities know what issues the community feels are important. Only by working as a

community can we find the strength to make real change. People become advocates when they voice their opinions to the public, and those in power by making phone calls or writing letters.

#### **Activist**

An activist's role in ActionNet is to show up to rallies and events, meet with legislators in their areas, and work directly for change. People become activists when they choose to do more than write letters or make phone calls. Activists address issues in a direct way, by meeting with individuals in power, such as government officials at any level. Activists work on issues as a group or join with other groups to address larger issues as part of a coalition.

#### **Regional contact**

The regional contacts are responsible for maintaining local groups, ensuring information is distributed to their local groups, and working with activists and advocates in their areas. Individuals in this position **will be required** to come to Madison once a month to receive training in a number of grassroots capacities, including group development, systems advocacy, and leadership training. This is a great chance to be a leader in your area!

**Join ActionNet and help us build a stronger community!**



## Be a part of the Change

- Include me in Southern WI Action Network for Disability Rights!

I live in:

- Dane County  
 Green County  
 Columbia County  
 Dodge County

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Desired Role

- Partner  
 Advocate  
 Activist  
 Regional Contact

Issues that concern me-

Jason Glozier

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