

Compass IL is a community based, nonresidential, private nonprofit agency that is staffed and governed by people with disabilities. Our focus is to empower people in making choices that maintain or increase their independence.

We serve people with disabilities, their families, and the community in which they live. We also work with area businesses and service providers that need assistance in responding to the needs of people with disabilities.

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Navigating Toward Independence and Freedom

2920 SCHNEIDER AVE SE  
MENOMONIE, WI 54751

JULY—SEPTEMBER 2025

# Note from the Executive Director

Summer is gone, and Fall is settling in. We've been busy here at CompassIL gearing up for some upcoming activities. The New Freedom Transportation Program will be hosting its annual driver training in October. This is the second year of hosting the training at the center, and we are looking forward to having another informative training for not just our own drivers, but volunteer drivers from other programs in the area as well. We are also looking forward to our annual Fishing Has No Boundaries event on September 13<sup>th</sup>, where we'll once again be hosting the event at Lake Wissota outside of Chippewa Falls. This is a great opportunity for people with disabilities to get out and do some fishing. CompassIL has been proud to be the sponsor of the Chippewa Valley Chapter of Fishing Has No Boundaries for the past 25 years!



On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Compass IL, along with a majority of the other IL Centers in Wisconsin, hosted the regional Aging, Disability, and Independent Living Network (ADILN) Forums that brought together staff from the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), Aging Units, and IL Centers to discuss the services offered by each agency. We had a great meeting at Compass IL, with representatives from seven of the eight ADRCs attending the meeting. We enjoyed the opportunity to discuss the various programs and services offered by the IL Centers and ADRCs, as well as explore potential opportunities for collaboration on services for consumers.

We are looking forward to our 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration on October 24 from 12 – 5 pm at CompassIL. Our itinerary for the event is set with a lineup of great speakers, along with other activities and a chance to win great prizes. Invitations were sent out last week to a limited number of individuals and agencies, and we are looking forward to having great attendance for the event.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff in all three of our departments: Independent Living, New Freedom Transportation, and Personal Assistant Services, for their hard work and dedication to providing services that enable persons with disabilities to remain living in and being an active part of their communities. That is what IL is all about!



# Fishing Has No Boundaries!

Fishing Has No Boundaries®, Inc. (FHNB) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to making the great outdoors accessible to individuals with disabilities through the sport of fishing. FHNB has expanded into a national organization with 27 chapters across 13 states, allowing thousands of participants with disabilities to enjoy this enriching, morale-boosting recreational activity.

Compass IL sponsored the 26th Annual Fishing Has No Boundaries event on September 13th, 2025, at the scenic 1917 Lake Wissota in Chippewa Falls, WI. The day was a wonderful success, providing opportunities for fun, fishing, and boating. We sincerely thank all participants, caregivers, volunteers, and sponsors for their support. Your involvement and dedication are the cornerstone of this event, which would not be possible without you. Special appreciation goes to the volunteers for their countless hours of behind-the-scenes effort.

## 2025 Sponsor List

Walmart  
Elizabeth Vetter  
Durand Brewing  
Costco  
Fleet Farm  
Eau Galle Cheese  
Mattison Contractors  
TJ Pottery  
Deb Cady  
Marine Credit Union  
Mike Gain and Lori McElveny  
Menomonie Co-Op  
Bait on Broadway  
Markquart  
Dicks Market  
Scheels  
Big Minnow  
James Kahl  
Cubbys Pizza  
Sams Club  
Premium Waters  
1917 Lake Wissota



*Big thank you for donating to the Venue!*

If you are interested in participating, volunteering, donating, or have a pontoon boat to contribute for our one-day 2026 event, please contact:

Bobbi Craig at [craigb@compassil.org](mailto:craigb@compassil.org) or Amanda Miller at [amandam@compassil.org](mailto:amandam@compassil.org). You can also reach us by phone at 715-233-1070.

## Meet the driver: James (Jimmy) Fuchs



Jimmy is originally from central Illinois; he retired in 2020 and moved to Wisconsin that same year. Prior to retirement, he built fixtures for Hallmark cards for 37 years. Jimmy has 6 kids total, several grandkids and several great grandkids as well. He is a huge promoter of organ and tissue donor awareness, Jimmy and his wife at the time received an award in IL called “Echo of Life Award” in August 2004. His passion for organ and tissue donor awareness came after losing their son in 1997.

His hobbies and interests include riding his motorcycle, stock car racing, spur of the moment get-away, making pies, helping others out, and enjoying life. Jimmy’s final words are get out there and enjoy life because life is too short!

I could not agree more Jimmy,  
Thank You for all you do!



Support your community by becoming a Volunteer Driver!

For more information, contact Melissa at [melw@compassil.org](mailto:melw@compassil.org) or call 715.233.1070 and ask for Melissa.





# Caregiver Highlight



Caregiver:  
Tawny Noble

This quarter's featured caregiver is Tawny Noble. Tawny. Tawny has recently celebrated her 7th anniversary with Compass IL, and we truly appreciate her valued presence on our team. She is a compassionate caregiver who consistently dedicates herself to supporting her consumers. Thank you, Tawny!

**A little bit about Tawny-**I find being a caregiver to be a fun, rewarding job! I enjoy seeing progress being made by my clients, and like knowing I have been a part of it. I am a wife and mother who enjoys watching her kids participate in sports. I also enjoy doing yoga, riding my bike, knitting, and reading!



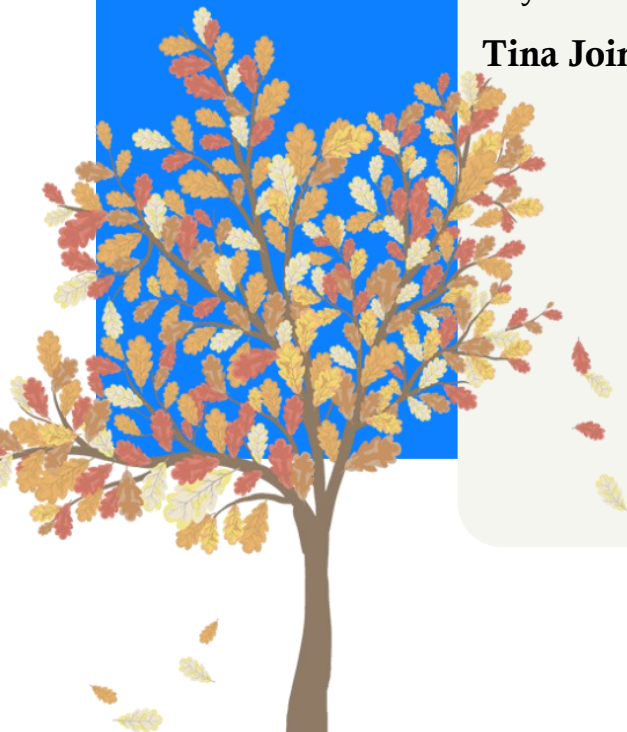
*Help empower  
our community  
members to live  
an independent  
lifestyle within  
their own  
homes!*

## Become a Caregiver

Are you searching for a truly fulfilling side hustle? We need caregivers to provide compassionate care in homes. Paid training and part-time hours. Competitive pay, flexible scheduling, and health benefits offered for full-time hours. Make a positive impact today as a caregiver. Start your fulfilling career now. Individuals with a criminal background are encouraged to apply-everyone deserves a chance to make a positive impact.

If you would like more information or an application contact

**Tina Joiner** [tinaj@compassil.org](mailto:tinaj@compassil.org) 715.233.1070 ext. 231.





## Assistive Technology Demonstration & Loan Program

WisTech is Wisconsin's Assistive Technology (AT) program. AT is a device or service that allows people to function as independently as possible at home, school, work, and in the community. CILWW is a regional AT Device and Demonstration Center. CILWW has almost 2,000 different AT devices that we can loan and/or demonstrate to people. CILWW staff can bring devices to people's homes, answer questions about devices, loan devices for a short period of time, give vendor and funding resources, and use their experience to help find the most cost effective options.

**Check out our new Assistive Technology devices!**

### Curve Talking Clock

Vision is often taken for granted, as routine activities such as checking the time can be challenging for individuals experiencing vision loss. Compass IL would like to highlight a device designed to make telling the time easier for those with vision impairment—the Curve Talking Clock.

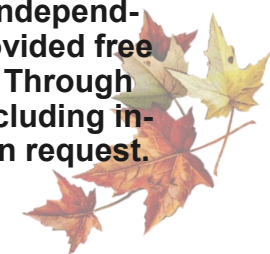
This device announces the time at the press of a button and can report the time hourly on demand. It features adjustable volume and an easy-to-use alarm. Its compact size allows for convenient use during social outings or around the home. The device is powered by 2-AA batteries.

The Curve Talking Clock is available from several online retailers, including Amazon and Walmart, and is priced at approximately \$20.00.



Compass IL offers the opportunity for individuals to borrow or try out items mentioned in our articles before making a purchase.

To learn more about this assistive device or other devices that can improve your independence, please contact CILWW at 715.233.1070 or 800.228.3287. Our services are provided free of charge. However, we do not directly fund the purchase of assistive technology. Through the WisTech Assistive Technology Program, CIL provides a variety of services, including information on alternative financing options like WisLoan, Telework, and TEPP, upon request.



# AT Programs & Services

## TEPP

### WisLoan + Telework

Loan programs designed for Wisconsinites with disabilities



**Independence First**  
The Resource For People With Disabilities

Are you or someone you know....

- Having difficulty hearing or using the telephone?
- Hard of hearing?
- Deaf or severely hard of hearing?
- Mobility/Motion impaired?
- Speech impaired?
- Deaf with low vision or blindness?
- Deaf and blind?



If you answered yes, you may be interested in finding the AT you need to access telephone services. Equipment could be amplified phones, captioning phones, neck loops, and other devices. Schedule an appointment to try a variety of equipment with one on one assistance from knowledgeable and experienced staff!

Staff can also help you apply for funding through TEPP: Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program. Money collected through WI telephone service providers goes into the WI Universal Service Fund, which pays for TEPP. CIL's role is to help you access the funding you need to get the equipment you need!

## Loan Programs

**WisLoan** offers loans to help people buy assistive technology or equipment such as modified vehicles, wheelchairs, and ramps. There are no income requirements and individuals are not required to exhaust personal or public funding. Under the program, banks provide loans at a fixed interest rate of 6.5% to qualified borrowers. Loan amounts depend on the item and ability to repay.

**Telework** is a loan program that allows residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from home or from other remote sites away from the office, such as work on the road or at a Telework center.





A great recreational opportunity that Compass IL strives to support and engage with consumers is fishing. In celebration of our 25th annual event in our 26 years as a Fishing Has No Boundaries Chapter. To support these activities, we would like to spotlight the Blind Fishin Buddy.

This device was created by a man named Al. He has been an avid fisherman his entire life. His family has taken annual fishing trips to Canada for over a decade. It has given him more memories than he can count. A trip that his family looks forward to yearly.

Shortly after retirement, he began to lose his eyesight due to health issues. Al still made it out on the water and was dedicated to this way of life he loved. As his vision worsened, he had to begin to rely on others to simply put a hook on his line. This became frustrating to lose independence.

The Blind Fishin Buddy started as an idea and soon became a family project. Originally, they were trying to develop something to help fishermen who could not see. They then realized that this can help literally everyone who wants to fish.

The Blind Fishin Buddy is a tool that should be essential to everyone's tackle box. It is designed to put a lure, hook, or other fishing equipment on your line. Whether you have difficulty seeing or shake a little, this product will give you back the confidence to do it for yourself.



The Blind Fishin Buddy can be purchased directly from their website, <https://blindfishinbuddy.com>, for \$34.99. Additional color and size hook guides can be purchased for \$1.99.

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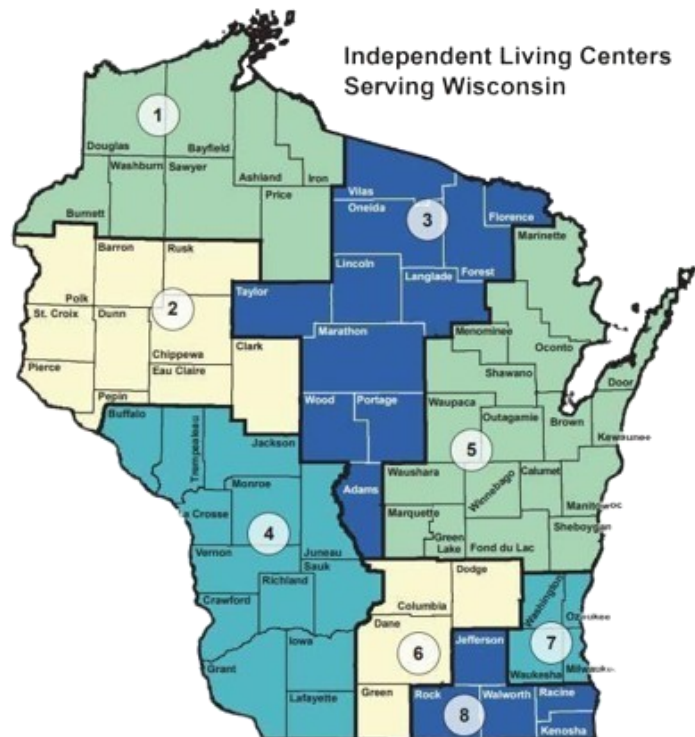
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## Find your local Independent Living Center

Did you know that Wisconsin has 8 Independent Living Centers? Independent living centers (ILCs) are consumer controlled, community based, cross disability, nonresidential private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities, and provide an array of independent living services.

Need help finding a personal care attendant? Looking for advice or support from someone with the same disability as you? Want to find an accessible form of recreation? All this and much more is available at your local independent living center.



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4. Independent Living Resources

5. Options for Independent Living
6. Access to Independence
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