

WIS PACT COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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► News at WisPACT - by Jack Longert

Another winter has come and gone since our last newsletter and we are happy to report that people remain very interested in our program, and more people are both joining the program and using their accounts to enhance the quality of their beneficiaries lives. In 2009, over 4 million dollars was spent on distributions for beneficiaries, from purchasing homes and automobiles to paying a few dollars for medications. These distributions supplemented beneficiaries income from disability benefits and allowed them to keep their Medical Assistance eligibility. Looking to the future, we are excited about the development of the Allow Card, and we are exploring other ways to enhance purchases by being in the WisPACT program. As we continue to grow, we are discovering more questions that need to be answered about the program, and how we are still only starting to reach people who can benefit from the services we provide. Thus, we are planning to hire a law student to help us answer more legal questions about the program and hire a part-time employee to allow us to expand our efforts at letting more people know about the program. You have expressed an overall high level of satisfaction with the program in your survey responses, and we look forward to continuing to serve you throughout 2010. Again, many thanks in your willingness to choose WisPACT to help you enrich your lives.

► Success Story -

WisPACT preserves assets for a nursing home resident

A common question asked by beneficiaries is whether WisPACT is able to establish trusts on very short notice. The answer is "yes". As an example, we received a request to establish a trust by the end of a month (on the 29th of that month) to allow a nursing home resident to become eligible for Medical Assistance at the beginning of the next month. With the help of Associated Trust Company, and a lot of hard work by the family attorney and staff, we were able to complete the trust and have it established timely. Our goal is to make every effort to allow us to help beneficiaries preserve their assets for permissible uses. In this situation, the beneficiary saved \$8000 for later personal use.

Vacation travel time is quickly approaching. If you need to make arrangements for tours, flights, accommodations, etc., here are a couple of travel agencies that have helped folks with disabilities make their dream vacations come true:

Able Trek Tours 608-524-3021 *Fox Travel* Contact: Rose Gray 920-451-6507

► Associated Trust Company Report - by Lisa Olson

Associated Trust Company has had the privilege of serving as Trustee for the WisPACT Inc. trusts since the inception of the WisPACT program in 2003. Over the last six and a half years, the program has grown from 75 accounts with a market value of \$4.5 million, to an astounding 719 accounts with a total market value of \$32 million! And, in the last four years alone, WisPACT has paid out approximately \$12.3 million in distributions to support the independence and self-sufficiency of its beneficiaries – people who otherwise would have insufficient resources to maintain a decent quality of life. As the Trust Officer in charge of the WisPACT program, I have had the unique opportunity to meet with and assist some of the neediest members of our society so that they, too, can receive better medical care, take part in community activities, visit family and friends, and have an overall higher quality and enjoyment of life. My hope is that the WisPACT, Inc. program continues its remarkable growth, and that the commitment to the very important and necessary cause that led to the creation of WisPACT continues for years to come.

► Request for Distribution Form

We have had some requests for an electronic version of the Request for Distribution form, which we now have available. Because there have been some additions to this form to help with distributions and accuracy we now ask everyone to use this new form as soon as possible. It can be used electronically or sent to you the "old" way, whichever you prefer. Our goal is to stop using all old forms in the next 60 days to make sure all of your requests are being handled as efficiently as possible.

You can send your requests for the new form to slong@wispact.org or call Sue Long at 608-268-6006 ext. 203. If Sue is out of the office please leave a voice message for her with your name, phone number and account number, if you have it available. Sue will mail the new form to you and will contact you if she needs additional information.

► Vacation Time!





WisPACT, Inc.

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Madison, WI 53713

Nonprofit Organization

U.S. Postage PAID

Madison, WI

Permit No. 479

What's Inside?

- ▶ Allow Card
- ▶ New Request
for Distribution
Form
- ▶ Vacation Time!
- Helpful Contacts
- ▶ News From:
 - Jack Longert
 - Lisa Olson

▶ Important Things to Remember

Make sure you are prepared to pay your property taxes. If you receive SSDI or no cash disability benefits, WisPACT can pay your property taxes like any other distribution. If you receive SSI, please call your beneficiary specialist to work out a plan for such payments-it can be complicated.

If you are a recipient of SSDI or no cash disability payments, the trust can pay for groceries or rent (shelter). If you are a recipient of SSI, it is more complicated and you should discuss this with your beneficiary specialist. It is unlikely that groceries can be paid without a loss of some SSI benefits.

WisPACT cannot pay bills that occurred prior to the opening of the trust under Wisconsin state law. Because of this, we believe the trust account is protected from almost all creditors who wish to be paid from the trust without the beneficiaries or advisors permission.

▶ Advisor Group

Do you have concerns as an advisor for your beneficiaries account? Would you like to talk to other beneficiaries about questions that might concern you? If so, we have an idea. Diane Liberski, an experienced advisor, has expressed willingness to coordinate an advisor group. If interested, please contact Jack Longert at jlongert@wispact.org, or 608-268-6006 ext. 201. You can also email Diane directly at dliberski@wi.rr.com. We will determine if there is enough interest to proceed with the group.

▶ Thanks to Wisconsin Attorneys

In Wisconsin, we are very lucky to have attorneys who are willing to sacrifice for others. We now have two attorneys in West Central Wisconsin who are willing to waive their fees for new WisPACT accounts with initial amounts under \$10,000. If you are interested, please contact Jack Longert and he can arrange the contact with the attorney. If other attorneys are interested in doing this in other parts of the state, let Jack know.