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Washington Access Fund
Independence is priceless. We make it affordable.

Access Fund News

February 2014

Do you have a story to share? Is there something you would like to learn about? Send your ideas to info@washingtonaccessfund.org! We'll include them in our newsletter and/or on Facebook.

Client Spotlight: Meet Maria-lynn!

Maria-lynn Olsson is a kind-hearted and dedicated advocate for children with and without disabilities. Maria-lynn knows what it is like to grow up having a disability, in her case Cerebral Palsy. Maria-lynn hopes to one-day work with youth with disabilities in a classroom setting.



Maria-lynn is the first enrollee in the Washington Access Fund's Work Opportunities IDA program through Washington's Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). Through this program Maria-lynn is saving for a "new" used car, which will take her to and from work and out to work meetings.

...Maria-lynn connected with the Washington Access Fund because she needed support as she makes steps towards moving into full-time employment. Like many others, Maria-lynn is concerned about what moving off of SSI and into full time work will mean for her life, her income, and her health benefits.

...Maria-lynn signed up for the Access Fund's Work Opportunities IDA program to save for her future car. By September of 2014, Maria-lynn is scheduled to save \$2,000. The Access Fund will match her savings and Maria-lynn will be able to obtain a car,

allowing her to continue to get to and from work and out to meetings.

[To read Maria-lynn's full profile, please visit the following link: [Maria-lynn Olsson](#).]

The Access Fund's Work Opportunities IDA's are for jobseekers with disabilities engaged with a Seattle-King or Snohomish County WorkSource Center. Individuals can save up for assets needed to overcome barriers to employment or self-employment and receive a 1-to-1 match. This IDA program is funded through the Department of Labor's Disability Employment Initiative grant ending September of 2014. **Accounts are still available and applications will be accepted through May 30th, 2014.** Contact Emerson Sekins for more information! Email: emerson@washingtonaccessfund.org or call (206) 328-5116.

Free Business Planning Webinar



Are you an entrepreneur with a disability who needs a business loan for your small business? Need help writing your business plan?

Then sign up for Washington Access Fund's free accessible web-based meetings!

The next series begins **Tuesday, March 18th from 12:00pm-1:30pm** and runs weekly (on Tuesdays for 7 weeks) until November 12th.

To Register:

- **Email:** kathy@washingtonaccessfund.org
- **Call:** 206-328-5116
- **TTY:** 1-888-494-4775

Please give 14 days notice of accommodations needed. Space is limited, sign up soon to reserve your spot!

"My experience attending the Webinars and networking with staff have proved to be very useful and I view the end results as a huge personal success." -- Webinar participant.

Financial Resource Day: Seattle



Save-the-Date: March 22nd for Financial Resource Day (Formerly Financial Fitness Day)! This event offers one-on-one assistance on a wide range of financial

issues, including tax preparation, credit counseling (and free credit reports), housing counseling, applying for public benefits, help with student loan applications, shredding documents, etc. There will be some new resources this year — including job readiness (e.g., resume-writing and job hunting skills); citizenship application and fee waiver assistance; as well as help with applying for veterans benefits.

Financial Resource Day will be held at the Rainier Community Center in Seattle from 10:00am-3:00pm. For more information, the program, and additional details please visit: [Financial Resource Day](#).

Microsoft Scholarships



The mission of DisAbility Scholarship at Microsoft is to empower and enable high schools students with disabilities to (a) go to college, (b) realize the impact technology has on the world, and (c) target a career in the technology industry. A primary goal of this scholarship is to increase the pool of persons living with a disability enrolling in higher education and, in long term, decrease the unemployment bias for this demographic.

For more information, eligibility requirements, and application materials please visit the following link: [Microsoft DisAbility Scholarships](#).

Rampathon Applications



The Master Builders Care Foundation is now accepting applications for Rampathon 2014. Since 1993 Rampathon has built more than 300 free ramps for families in King and Snohomish counties through this annual event. The Care Foundation is proud to help local veterans, children in need and elderly community members become more mobile and independent. Apply for a ramp for your neighbor, your relative or yourself.

For more information and an application please visit [Rampathon](#) online or call (800) 522-2209. Applications must be received by **Friday, Feb. 28, 2014**.

Chocolate Myracles

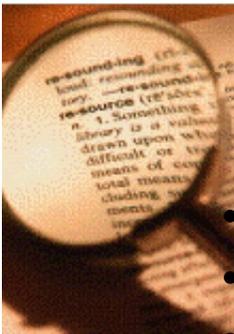


February is a month to indulge in chocolate! Julie Balassa Myracle, the Master Chocolatier behind Chocolate Myracles, is an Access Fund client and a wonderful person! This chocolate shop is committed to using chocolates and couvertures made from fairly traded cacao beans. Julia's shop features the most delightful truffles, adorable chocolate bears, a variety of bars and lovely hearts just in time for Valentine's Day!

To place an order or for more information, you can contact Julia directly at julia@chocolatemyracles.com. If you're in Spokane be sure to find [Chocolate Myracles on Facebook](#) and keep up with the various activities and events that are going on (we recommend going to the Family Chocolate Tasting and Story Time on February 22nd!).

Read more about Julia's background and involvement with the Access Fund in a profile she did with us a few years back: [Business Equipment Refinanced](#).

February Resources



Special Education Technology Center: The [SETC](#) offers webinars on various software programs and devices, they are a great way to learn about the different programs! Here is one upcoming webinar (be sure to check out the website for more!).

- **February 19th:** [Dragon Dictation Software and Apps webinar](#)
- **February 20th:** [iPad: Apps that Help me Tap webinar](#)
- **February 26th:** [Bookshare Overview webinar](#)

February 11th: The Next SCI Form is on "Get a Handle on it: Maximizing Hand & Arm Function after SCI" at the University of Washington through the Northwest Regional Spinal Cord Injury System. For more information please visit: [SCI Forum](#).

February 13th: Employment and Social Security Disability Benefits – Important Considerations. This training will provide a brief overview of the impact of earnings on disability benefits, as well as other important things to consider as you return to work. Participants will learn what to prepare for, how to access and utilize work incentives, how and when to report to Social Security and other required entities; as well as where to access additional help and information about the impact of employment on benefits. For more information please visit: [Work Support Training](#).

February 18th: "Effective Communication in Medical Settings" Webinar. Part of being an informed patient and making good health choices depends on understanding complex issues. For people with disabilities who may face communication barriers, poor or ineffective communication pertaining to serious medical issues can have disastrous results. Join this webinar to learn about effective communication in medical settings. For more information and to register visit: [Effective Communication Webinar](#).

Vancouver, WA: Autism Mom's Support Group. Are you a mom that has a child that experiences Autism? Are you looking to socialize with other moms? Contact Melissa Dodge at (360) 901-0492 or melissad722@msn.com or contact Dixee Matthiesen at (360) 606-0050 or dixee@hotmail.com.

deafREVIEW: [10 Tips for Hiring \(Qualified\) Sign Language Interpreters](#).

Shop For A Cause



You shop. Amazon gives.

AmazonSmile offers a new way to support the Washington Access Fund while you shop online:

When you sign into smile.amazon.com, 0.5% of the price from eligible purchases will be donated to the nonprofit you select. Simply designate the

Washington Access Fund as your nonprofit of choice the first time you sign in, and all future purchases will benefit us when you start your shopping at smile.amazon.com.



WashingtonAccessFund

Our mission is to promote access to technology and economic opportunity for individuals with disabilities in Washington State. The Washington Access Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI).

Washington Access Fund provides: [Assistive Technology Loans](#), [Business Equipment Loans](#), [CCTV Rentals](#), and [Matched Savings IDAs](#)

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Washington Access Fund | 100 South King Street | Ste. 280 | Seattle | WA | 98116