

1993-95 Project Abstract, for the period ending June 30, 1995.

This project was supported by the MN Future Resources Fund.

Title: Recreational Programming: Inclusiveness for
Persons with Disabilities

Program Manager: Susan Rivard

Organization: Vinland National Center

Legal Citation: M.L. 93, Chpt. 172, Art. 1, Sect. 14, Subd.
10(s)

Approp. Amount: \$160,000

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

To provide staff training and consultation, targeted outreach, and resource education which will enhance the inclusiveness, accessibility, and utilization of programs at the Metropolitan YMCA, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), and Camp Fire Boys and Girls by persons with disabilities.

OVERALL PROJECT RESULTS

Each organization made many changes --in attitudes and procedures-- to facilitate participation in their programs and activities by people with disabilities. They each developed internal procedures for handling registration, making accommodations, evaluating the effectiveness of their services to people with disabilities, and documenting participation by people with disabilities. Key staff were given responsibilities to facilitate inclusion. Over 360 staff at the YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire received training on how to work with people with disabilities. A disability awareness training manual was developed to ensure that staff training to facilitate inclusion is ongoing; this manual can be used by other organizations to replicate the project model for inclusive programming. Targeted mailings, welcoming language in agency brochures and forms, public relations articles, and "resource education" for over 650 consumers, parents, and professionals were done to encourage people with disabilities to participate in programs and activities. Each organization took steps to ensure that changes facilitated by this project will continue and inclusion will become a "way of doing business". Significantly, even before the conclusion of the project, measurable results documenting enhanced inclusiveness were achieved: the YMCAs served 502 youth with disabilities during summer 1994, and MPRB parks served 393 youth with disabilities during spring 1995.

PROJECT RESULTS USE AND DISSEMINATION

The YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire each received several copies of the disability awareness training manual to ensure that staff training on inclusion continues on an ongoing basis. This manual will also be available to other recreation professionals to be used as a blueprint for replicating the methodology used by the YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire to achieve inclusive and universally accessible programming. Presentations to encourage other organizations to replicate the project's model for inclusive programming were made at the 1994 National Recreation and Park Association conference and will be made at the 1995 Minnesota Recreation and Park Association conference.

Date of Report: July 1, 1995

LCMR Final Workprogram Update Report

I. Project Title: Recreational Programming: Inclusiveness for Persons with Disabilities

Program Manager: Susan Rivard
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Address: P.O. Box 308, Loretto, MN 55357
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A. Legal Citation: M.L. 93 Chpt. 172, Art. 1, Sect. 14, Subd. 10 (s)

Total Biennial LCMR Budget: \$160,000
Balance: \$0

Appropriation Language as Drafted 7/27/92:

This appropriation is from the future resources fund to the commissioner of education for a contract with Vinland National Center to provide staff training and consultation, targeted outreach and resource education, to enhance the inclusiveness, accessibility, and utilization of existing recreational programs by persons with disabilities.

B. LMIC Compatible Data Language: Not applicable

C. Status of Match Requirement: Not applicable

II. Narrative:

This project will enable persons with disabilities, like persons without disabilities, to access and participate in all activities and programs offered at selected community-based recreational organizations in the metro area. This will be accomplished by training staff at the selected organizations to feel comfortable about and prepared to include persons with disabilities in their programs and by providing consultation to staff about adaptations needed to accommodate persons with disabilities. The selected organizations will be helped to develop an outreach plan designed to encourage persons with disabilities to participate in their programs. In turn, informational workshops will be offered to encourage persons with disabilities to participate in programs and activities offered at the selected organizations.

III. Statement of Objectives

- A. Staff Training and Program Adaptation
- B. Targeted Outreach
- C. Resource Education for the Disability Community

IV. Objectives

A. Title of Objective: Staff Training and Program Adaptation

A.1. Narrative: Train and consult with staff of selected recreational organizations in the metro area (including but not limited to the YMCA and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board) to make their programs more inclusive and therefore more accessible to persons with disabilities.

A.2. Procedures:

Establish a steering committee of professionals and representatives from the disability community to provide input and guidance on project activities. This committee will function in an advisory capacity and will hold quarterly meetings.

Identify a minimum of three community-based organizations in the metro area, including but not limited to the YMCA and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, to be used as project training sites.

Develop a disability awareness curriculum package that will enable staff at selected recreational organizations to feel comfortable working with persons with disabilities, understand factual information about common disabilities and the functional limitations typically associated with them, and develop a delivery style that promotes an atmosphere of acceptance.

Provide disability awareness training for staff of selected recreational organizations using this curriculum package. Each organization will receive a copy of the training curriculum, and procedures will be determined to ensure that disability awareness training is provided to existing and new staff at each facility on an ongoing basis.

Provide consultation to selected recreational organizations to identify adaptations in program content and implementation strategies to enhance inclusiveness and enable persons with disabilities to participate in activities and programs.

Help each selected organization develop internal procedures for handling registration and concomitant accommodations or

assistance needed by persons with disabilities who sign up for programs, classes, or activities at selected organizations. Develop record-keeping system to document accommodations and adaptations made and their effectiveness.

Develop a procedure for evaluating the effectiveness of programmatic improvements by tracking the level of participation in programs by persons with disabilities at each selected recreational organization. If information is available, compare the number of persons with disabilities who participated in programs prior to the improvements at each selected organization with the number who participate following the improvements.

A.3. Budget:

- a. Amount Budgeted: \$75,000
- b. Balance: \$0

A.4. Timeline:

	7/93	1/94	6/94	1/95	6/95
Steering committee	xx				
Identify selected organizations	xxx				
Develop training curriculum	xxxxxxxxxx				
Staff training	xx				
Adaptation consultation			xx		
Develop internal procedures		xx			
Evaluate effectiveness				xx	

A.5. Status:

- a. Steering committee: A steering committee of professionals from various community organizations and representatives from the disability community was established during the first project quarter; subcommittees were identified and meetings were held on 9-20-93, 12-7-93, 3-29-94, 6-7-94, 9-14-94, 12-6-94, 3-7-95, and 6-6-95. The steering committee was an excellent resource for the project and provided input about the content for the disability awareness manual

and age / training, adaptations for specific activities, community resources, ways to work more effectively with each agency's administration, and ways to activate the Camp Fire organization.

b. Three community-based organizations were selected as project sites: the Metropolitan YMCA; the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Recreation Division; and Camp Fire Boys and Girls, Minnesota Lakes Council, Inc. The first priority with each organization was to secure the commitment of upper management and/or the governing board to the concept of inclusion and their endorsement of cooperation with the Vinland LCMR project.

Accordingly, Vinland project staff met with the YMCA's ADA Committee, which includes the President and the Vice President of Marketing; the management team at MPRB Recreation Division; and Camp Fire's Program Committee, which consists of the President and Board members, to secure their endorsement of the LCMR project goals.

c. Staff training and development of internal procedures and a system for tracking numbers served for each of the three organizations participating in the project: Each organization decided to focus their initial efforts on encouraging more participation by youth with disabilities. Because each organization's administrative and programmatic structure is different, the approach in each situation was individualized. Details follow.

Metropolitan YMCA: The primary project contact persons at the YMCA at the conclusion of the project were Polly Harrison and Sue Erickson, Ridgedale YMCA associate executive director. Vinland staff worked with the 10 metro area YMCA branches and 4 YMCA camps. A person at each agency and camp was identified as the "inclusion contact person" for any participant who has a special need and as the primary contact for Vinland staff regarding project-related activities. These contact names were publicized in a variety of ways so that potential participants with disabilities will be aware of the efforts being made by the YMCA to make their programs accessible.

The YMCA determined that their need was for individualized, center-specific training rather than for agency-wide training. Most of their staff had participated in general agency-wide disability awareness training in the past and now needed more

specific training that would address strategies for creating an inclusive atmosphere and integrating people with disabilities into activities; guidelines for handling registrations and using the agency-specific assessment and evaluation forms developed by the project (each center developed its own version of the evaluation form); adaptations for specific activities; procedures for medication administration and one-on-one assistance; and questions/needs peculiar to each center.

Accordingly, as per YMCA request, Vinland staff scheduled training dates with each YMCA center during fall 1994. Project staff met with the designated inclusion contact person(s) at each branch, focusing on the specific issues identified above, and, in addition, reviewing the draft of the disability awareness manual and soliciting input about what should be added to the manual. Following is a schedule of the YMCA trainings that were held:

- Southdale: 10-26-94 (3 people)
- North Community: 10-27-94 (2 people)
- Minnesota Valley: 11-1-94 (1 person)
- Ridgedale: 11-8-94 (6 people)
- Northwest: 11-9-94 (2 people)
- Hiawatha: 11-9-94 (1 person)
- Northtown Northeast: 11-10-94 (3 people)
- Downtown: 11-28-94 (2 people)
- Blaisdell: 11-28-94 (3 people)

In addition to these individualized trainings, at the special request of the YMCA, three more trainings were held, including:

- Downtown (for aquatics, fitness, service desk, and support staff from several branches): 2-16-95. (25 people)
- Ridgedale (follow-up training with the designated inclusion contact person(s) from each branch, to discuss the final process, procedures, and policies for inclusion): 4-18-95. (14 people)
- Southdale (for Adventure Club staff from metro area branches): 1-26-95 (15 people)

Trainings were structured to allow time to address the questions and needs of each center's staff. A draft copy of the disability awareness manual was used at the trainings to familiarize staff with its contents and solicit input about other information to include. Staff were also introduced to the latest version of the

YMCA's inclusion statement which would be printed in their brochures to publicize their inclusive environment.

Certain other agency-specific issues (such as accessible transportation resources, telephone training, job descriptions for staff with inclusion responsibilities) were addressed by project staff meeting directly with appropriate agency staff.

Forms were developed for YMCA staff to use for registration, assessment, documentation of the level of participation in agency programs by persons with disabilities, evaluation of participant/parent/instructor satisfaction with the inclusion experience and the effectiveness of the accommodations, one-on-one assistance, and medication administration. These forms were reviewed with YMCA staff and distributed to the centers to use and modify according to their individual center needs. Staff feedback and suggested modifications were collected. A cover letter was drafted in fall 1994 by Sue Erickson, Ridgedale YMCA assistant executive director, to send with the final version of the assessment form when it was distributed to staff; this letter reiterated the agency's commitment to inclusion and clarified the responsibilities of various staff in the inclusion process.

A survey was done to collect information on the number of persons with disabilities served in the past at YMCA centers to provide a benchmark against which to measure growth in numbers served. No information was obtained, however, because there was no system in place for the collection of this data before the start of the project.

Even before the conclusion of the project, there was concrete evidence that the YMCA's initial efforts to make internal changes to facilitate inclusion had been successful. A survey was done in October 1994 of 12 YMCA centers regarding the number of youth with disabilities who participated in summer programs. The results indicated that impressive numbers of youth with disabilities had taken part in activities: a total of 502 youth with disabilities were served, including 68 with developmental disabilities, 49 with learning disabilities, 137 with physical disabilities, and 248 with attention deficit/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Project staff attended the YMCA's ADA (Americans with Disabilities) Committee meetings to keep informed of the committee's priorities and provide project updates.

To ensure that inclusion efforts continue, the YMCA has defined several steps:

- Each branch currently has a designated inclusion contact person who has received special training and is prepared to ensure access to programs and facilities for persons with disabilities at their branch. If an inclusion contact person moves to a different position within their branch, they will retain their inclusion responsibilities as part of their new position; if they leave the branch, their replacement will be trained to assume the inclusion responsibilities so there will be no gaps.
- The inclusion contact person at Ridgedale, who has experience working with people with disabilities, has been designated as the "head" contact person for all YMCA branches in Minnesota.
- The provision of ongoing disability awareness training for staff is a key to the continuation of inclusion. Accordingly, the GEM (Go the Extra Mile) training required of every new YMCA employee within 30 days of hire will include an explanation of the inclusion philosophy and process. In addition, the inclusion contact person at each branch will be responsible for arranging special training sessions for key staff using the inclusion video and manual from the project. The YMCA is also looking for additional ways to incorporate inclusion into existing staff training.
- The ADA committee, which is now part of the YMCA's organizational structure, will continue to meet on an as-needed basis to address accessibility and inclusion issues and be available as a resource for staff as concerns arise.
- The YMCA recognizes that ensuring universal access to programs may occasionally involve additional expenses. Each branch has the responsibility of building these expenses into their budget and authorizing expenditures on a case-by-case basis.
- Collection of data on the number of persons with

disabilities served, an important measure of inclusion success, has been systematized. This information will be collected by the inclusion contact person at each branch who will handle all requests for accommodations. This data will be summarized and turned in to the Ridgedale branch inclusion contact person (who has been designated as the "head" inclusion contact person for all YMCA branches) on an annual basis and then forwarded to appropriate administrative staff.

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Recreation Division (MPRB): The primary project contact person at MPRB was John Dickinson, district supervisor, Recreation Division. Originally, eight MPRB centers were selected as focal points for project activities, but the decision was soon made not to limit the project to selected sites. Each MPRB center identified an inclusion contact person to serve as the initial resource for any participant with a special need and as the primary contact for Vinland staff regarding project-related activities. An individualized approach to inclusion was necessary with each center because of the great diversity from center to center in function, programming, and accessibility.

Like the YMCA, MPRB determined that smaller, more focused trainings would better meet their staff's needs. Accordingly, the following training sessions were held:

- For Longfellow Park staff: December 14, 1993 at Longfellow Park; a second session was held on July 14, 1994. (5 people)
- For city-wide staff: February 8, 1994 at Folwell Park. Focus was on "person-first" language and telephone guidelines for responding to inquiries from persons with disabilities. (100 people)
- For Youthline staff and MPRB centers in the north and east sides: June 17, 1994 at North Commons. Included a panel of persons with disabilities to answer questions. (12 people)
- For MPRB centers in the south side and Longfellow park staff: July 14, 1994 at Phillips Community Center. (22 people)
- For MPRB centers in the west side: September 8, 1994 at Lynnhurst Community Center. (18 people)

- For Rec Plus (day care) program staff: September 16, 1994 at Logan Park. (23 people)
- For Park PIAs (Public Information Attendants) city-wide: done by MPRB district supervisor. Included disability awareness video. (30 people)
- NRPA (National Recreation and Parks Association) Conference: October 12, 1994 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. (35 people)

Participant evaluations were solicited after each site-based training to provide feedback to project staff about the usefulness of the information and suggestions about additional areas to address.

Forms were developed (assessment, parent evaluation, participant evaluation, instructor evaluation) to enable MPRB staff to handle registration and accommodations for participants with disabilities, document the effectiveness of the accommodations, track the level of participation in agency programs by persons with disabilities, and evaluate the participant's satisfaction with their experience at the agency. These forms were reviewed with appropriate MPRB staff and distributed to them to use and modify according to their needs; their suggestions were used in the development of the final drafts. Policies and procedures were developed for accessible transportation, one-to-one assistance, and medication administration. An explanatory cover letter was sent with these policies to appropriate staff.

In addition to the development of specialized forms, MPRB revised their phone/walk-in registration form and their mail-in registration form to include a place to indicate if accommodations are needed for the registrant to participate. If accommodations are indicated, the park supervisors contact the registrant for further information, using the intake and assessment forms developed by the project.

To demonstrate and role-model the assessment process and use of the assessment form, project staff participated in intake meetings with park staff, parents, and youth with disabilities who were registering for a program at a park center. These experiences provided park staff with a supervised opportunity to observe and practice the assessment process.

A survey was distributed to MPRB staff to determine the number of persons with disabilities served in past years by the project pilot centers/programs. These figures provided a benchmark against which to measure growth in numbers served as a result of project efforts. The numbers generated by the survey were estimates since there was no system in place to collect this information in the past. Survey results were: Golf program (Folwell, Logan, and Phillips Parks) - 0 served; Rec Plus - 8 served city-wide; Painter Park - 2 served; Longfellow Park - 1 served; Youthline/Special Events - 2 served; and North Commons - 0 served program.

Vinland project staff regularly attended the MPRB city-wide staff meetings and the Including People with Disabilities Committee meetings. Vinland's recommendation to add a person with a disability (a "consumer") to the membership of the committee was realized before the conclusion of the project.

As with the YMCA, there was concrete evidence before the conclusion of the project that MPRB's efforts to make internal changes to facilitate inclusion were successful.

- 1994: Unified Sports was a new program specifically added to promote inclusion at the parks. The first Unified Sports activity --co-ed volleyball held March - May, 1994-- was an inclusion success, with 5 students with and 6 students without disabilities participating. During winter/spring 1994 at Longfellow Park, 4 youth with disabilities participated in a variety of programs as a result of the inclusion statement/request for accommodations on the park's promotional flyers. And, as a result of flyers sent to the special education departments at local schools, students with disabilities registered for the summer 1994 Urban Rangers Day Camp program.
- 1995: At 41 parks/park centers a total of 393 youth with disabilities participated in programs during spring quarter 1995.

Like the YMCA, MPRB has taken several steps to ensure the continuation of their inclusion efforts:

- The Including People with Disabilities Committee will continue to be an active, functioning committee with responsibility for promoting and

Facilitating MPRB's inclusion efforts as serving as a resource for staff. With project staff assistance, an Inclusion Calendar was developed which identifies a timeline for specific tasks and events that promote inclusion. The committee is responsible for monitoring this calendar. Current committee membership includes the district supervisor, three district representatives, a consumer, and professionals from the University of Minnesota, ARC of Hennepin County, and Minneapolis public schools.

- Information on the inclusion philosophy and process has been incorporated into the MPRB's Public Information Attendant training and is planned to be added to the Three S and Summer Playground Leader trainings. Some of these trainings are required of certain staff, and attendance at some result in a pay raise for attendees.
- The inclusion contact person at each park/center will continue to play a critical role in ensuring access to programs for people of all abilities. The MPRB district supervisor will discuss with the administration the revising of job descriptions and qualifications so that people with disability experience and expertise could be considered priority candidates to fill certain positions as openings arise. If some of the positions that become vacant through natural attrition are filled with people with disability expertise, within a few years MPRB will have a number of staff with the ability to promote inclusion while doing their job.
- In a March 1994 reorganization plan for the MPRB recreation division, it was proposed that citywide program specialist positions be established to ensure that all program areas and population groups are served to the fullest extent. One of the program specialist positions, which is yet to be filled, would be responsible for park users with disabilities. The creation of this specialized position and support of the funding it requires is an indication of MPRB's commitment to inclusion of people of all abilities in their programs.
- At the conclusion of the project, MPRB finalized a system for data collection on the number of

people with disabilities served. The inclusion contact person at each MPRB center or park, who handles requests for accommodations, will complete the quarterly Seasonal Summary Report, which was revised to include a separate column in which to record numbers of participants with disabilities who were served. This report will go to their district supervisor, who will in turn summarize the information submitted by all centers and parks and forward it to the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and/or Board.

- MPRB plans to celebrate their inclusion successes by making a presentation to the Park and Recreation Board outlining the accomplishments facilitated by the project, issuing a special proclamation confirming their commitment to inclusion of people of all abilities, and co-hosting the 1995 Vinland Break Your Own Barriers event celebrating the abilities of people with and without disabilities.

Camp Fire Boys and Girls, Minnesota Council, Inc.: The primary project contact person at Camp Fire was Mary Ellen Strapp, Club Administrator.

Progress with the Camp Fire organization was slower than progress with the other two organizations. Unlike the YMCA and MPRB, Camp Fire had not initiated efforts to be more inclusive prior to their involvement with the project. In addition, the Camp Fire organization underwent several administrative changes, moved their central offices to a different location, and was without an executive director during much of the project period, all of which served to detract from their focus on project objectives.

A summary of actions and accomplishments with Camp Fire includes the following:

- In fall 1993, project staff met with Camp Fire's Program Committee (president and board members) to present project goals and invite their participation in the project. At a subsequent board retreat, this committee endorsed project participation and brainstormed about their particular needs.
- Vinland staff met with Camp Fire management staff and selected board members to define priorities and set a timeline for activities. It was decided

to train key youth in Camp Fire groups to be the Inclusion Specialists who would in turn train the group leaders and other group members and do outreach to secure the participation of youth with disabilities in Camp Fire groups.

- In December 1993 and throughout winter 1994, despite repeated efforts by project staff, meetings to move forward with implementation plans were delayed by Camp Fire staff because of internal re-organization. In spring 1994, Camp Fire met with project staff and announced a change in plans: they decided to focus their project-related efforts on disability awareness training for the volunteer leaders of the Starflight and Adventure groups (Kindergarten - grade five). Two training sessions (August 15 and September 20, 1994) were scheduled for volunteer leaders and interested parents; project staff would train the leaders to teach about inclusion to the students in their clubs, and the students would earn an emblem by learning about inclusion and diversity.
- Project staff prepared for the scheduled August and September training sessions by developing special materials, including a pre- and post-assessment that addresses student attitudes toward people with disabilities, and reviewing Camp Fire emblem books to identify which activities could be used to earn the disability awareness emblem. Despite an article in the August Camp Fire newsletter, separate flyers sent to all volunteer leaders, and personal calls to leaders by Camp Fire staff, however, both sessions had to be canceled because of lack of response.
- Project staff was scheduled to attend Camp Fire recruitment nights in September 1994 to provide information about inclusion to prospective students and parents; the September recruitment nights were canceled and re-scheduled for October, but project staff were not notified about the new dates.
- In November 1994, Camp Fire again changed their plans and decided to train the 15-20 paid Camp Fire staff people instead of the volunteer leaders; these Camp Fire staff would, in turn, train the volunteer leaders to work with youth with disabilities. It was felt that this would provide a more solid base for inclusion within the

organization since there is more stability within the paid staff than within the volunteer leader group. The staff disability awareness training was scheduled to take place in conjunction with a December 1994 all-staff meeting. At the last minute, however, the training was canceled because the meeting agenda was too full to allow sufficient training time; the training was re-scheduled for January 11, 1995.

- The following trainings were held with the Camp Fire organization:
 - Volunteer leaders: 1-11-95. (15 people)
 - Club administrators and program managers from the metro area: 4-19-95. (5 people)
 - Club administrators throughout Minnesota, camp staff, and the new executive director: 5-3-95. (20 people)

Vinland staff worked with Camp Fire to ensure that an inclusion statement and a place to indicate the need for accommodations would be included in their literature, starting with the fall 1994 registration flyers.

In summary, there were a number of internal situations within the Camp Fire organization that contributed to the slower progress in achieving their project-related goals, including a merger between the St. Paul and Minneapolis organizations, the absence of an executive director, and higher-than-usual turnover among the paid Camp Fire staff (whose responsibilities were greater than usual because of the absence of a director). Even our initial success in securing the endorsement of the Camp Fire president and board members did not compensate for the internal struggles which distracted Camp Fire staff during much of the project.

As a direct result of involvement with the project and the trainings that were held, however, the Camp Fire organization expresses a strong commitment to inclusion. Because Camp Fire, unlike the YMCA and MPRB, had no foundation in place for inclusion, it was expected that progress would not keep pace with the other organizations. In a way different from the other two organizations, it was rewarding to work with Camp Fire: when we actually started working with staff and providing trainings, it was as though a light had been turned on. Inclusion was, for them, an entirely new concept, and the enthusiasm with which they embraced it

was exciting. As a result of involvement with the LCMR project, Camp Fire has an increased level of awareness about the need for and benefits of inclusion.

d. Disability awareness training manual: A draft of the disability awareness training manual was completed in fall 1994 and used during the trainings with YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire. It was a "working copy" which was revised based on feedback from the trainings. The final draft of the manual, completed in spring 1995, includes information on specific disabilities and functional limitations; adaptations and strategies for inclusion; disability etiquette; the Americans with Disabilities Act; data privacy; community resources (disability organizations, personal care providers, educational videos, interpreter referral sources, and accessible transportation companies); scenarios and ice-breakers; sample press releases, job descriptions for inclusion staff, interview questions, and promotional flyers; and a disability database to use for promotional mailings. Each agency's manual was individualized to also include copies of the forms used by that particular agency for intake, assessment, and evaluation.

Included with each manual were copies of Celebrate the Earth (an inclusive environmental education curriculum for people with and without disabilities), "All Ways Welcome" (a Canadian video developed to generate discussion about attitudes), "Responding to Disability: A Question of Attitude" (a publication by the Minnesota State Council on Disability), information on how to utilize the Minnesota Relay System, and other supplemental materials.

The final version of the training manual was distributed to YMCA branches and camps; MPRB pilot centers, administrative staff, and inclusion committee members; the Camp Fire organization; and members of the steering committee at the conclusion of the project. Following is a list of how copies were distributed:

- YMCA --18 copies
- MPRB --17 copies
- Camp Fire --10 copies
- Professionals who shared information --10 copies
- Project steering committee --12 copies

e. Significance: Each organization made significant progress in developing and operationalizing the administrative and procedural "underpinnings" which are

essential to inclusion: developing necessary forms/policies/procedures, record-keeping systems, and evaluation plans to document, track, and evaluate participation by people with disabilities. Key staff within each organization were identified as having responsibility for various aspects of inclusion at their particular branch, park, or center. Even more significant, each organization secured a commitment to inclusion from the top administrative positions and identified steps to ensure that changes facilitated by the project would continue.

Since the primary obstacle to inclusion is attitudinal barriers, the provision of staff training was perhaps the key element to ensuring the success of the project. As a result of the 23 training sessions which were held, 362 staff members at the three organizations learned the basic skills necessary to ensure access to their programs by people with disabilities. The process of working with people with disabilities was de-mystified and staff were given concrete tools to promote an atmosphere of acceptance and work with groups of varying abilities. As a result, staff now feel comfortable welcoming participation by people with disabilities in their programs and, hopefully as the next step, will actively reach out and encourage that participation by diverse users. In short, staff now have the skills and the commitment to make inclusion happen and keep happening.

If staff training is the key to promoting attitudinal change, the disability awareness training manual developed by the project is the key to ensuring that staff training that teaches inclusion philosophy and strategies continues at each organization on an ongoing basis. This manual can also be used by other organizations to initiate a plan to achieve universally accessible programming.

While not the only measure of inclusion success, the large numbers of youth with disabilities served by the YMCA (502 during summer 1994) and MPRB (393 during spring 1995) not long after project activities were initiated is an indication of increased access to programs at these organizations.

Clearly, a legal mandate such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, while perhaps a necessary first step, will not, in and of itself, create an inclusive environment. For that to happen, attitudes must change; for attitudes to change, people must be

educated about why inclusion is important and how it can be accomplished. This was perhaps the most exciting aspect of this project: seeing the systemic change that can happen as a result of education and the attitudinal change that education produces.

A.6. Benefits:

The inclusion of persons with disabilities in recreational programs is dependent upon direct service staff being prepared for the challenge of working with groups of varying abilities and learning differences. The most significant barrier to inclusion is often an attitudinal barrier: the service provider's feeling that they are not prepared to include persons with disabilities in their program.

Training provided through this project will enable community-based recreational providers to understand the benefits of inclusion to persons both with and without disabilities, feel comfortable about working with persons with disabilities, and be prepared to provide services that meet everyone's needs.

Title of Objective: Targeted Outreach

B.1. Narrative: Develop an outreach plan for selected recreational organizations which will increase public awareness and encourage persons with disabilities to participate in programs at these facilities.

B.2. Procedures:

Identify barriers to program participation by persons with disabilities (such as non-accepting attitudes of others, concern for personal safety, lack of information about resources and how to access them, transportation, fees) and develop an action plan to overcome barriers.

Develop special promotional materials that demonstrate how the facility has addressed barriers to participation and affirm the facility's commitment to inclusive programming.

Do targeted mailings to both individuals and appropriate organizations/advocacy groups within the geographic area served by each selected recreational organization to inform the community about programmatic improvements and efforts to make services equally accessible to persons with and without disabilities.

Incorporate information about enhanced inclusiveness and accessibility into each facility's standard brochures, circulars, and informational materials.

B.3. Budget:

a. Amount budgeted: \$50,000

b. Balance: \$0

B.4. Timeline:

7/93	1/94	6/94	1/95	6/95
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Identify/resolve barriers

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Develop promotional materials

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Do targeted mailings

xxxxxxx

Revise standard brochures to demonstrate inclusiveness

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

B.5. Status:

a. Identification of barriers: Many steps were taken to identify barriers to program participation by persons with disabilities.

- A benchmark survey was done of key MPRB staff to identify perceived barriers to and concerns about inclusion and suggestions about needed training. The results of this survey were summarized in the 1-1-94 status report.
- A survey was done during winter/spring 1994 of 104 people with various disabilities (including people with physical disabilities, emotional and behavioral disturbances, traumatic brain injury, chemical dependency, mental illness, and developmental disabilities) to identify barriers. There were many barriers noted, with the most frequent being lack of funds (to pay class fees), no information on how to access programs and classes, non-accepting attitudes of others, no friends to go with, and lack of transportation. Some individuals made specific suggestions about how to make community-based programs and classes more accessible and "user-friendly." This information was incorporated into the marketing and outreach plans developed with project agencies.
- Project staff attended meetings hosted by ARC of Hennepin County to create a forum for dialogue and

problem-solving between parents, self-advocates, and MPRB park officials. Parents gave park Commissioners and other MPRB staff constructive suggestions about how the parks can better serve people with disabilities. Specific recommendations included: promotional materials and brochures that are welcoming to people with disabilities, staff training in disability awareness, higher staffing ratios, assessment forms to provide information about needed accommodations, and emphasis on non-competitive skill-building activities. Most of these recommendations will be addressed through the Vinland Inclusion Project.

- On 2-24-94 project staff participated in a Special Education Advisory Council meeting at the Minneapolis Public Schools administrative building and surveyed a group of parents there about barriers to their child's participation in programs. The most significant barriers noted were staff's lack of knowledge about and experience with inclusion and inadequate staffing levels. A primary recommendation by the parents was for staff training that teaches strategies for working with people with disabilities and the importance and benefits of inclusion. These issues will be addressed through the Vinland Inclusion Project.

As a result of this information-gathering about barriers to participation, Vinland staff developed a list of recommended actions for the participating organizations to facilitate inclusion and eliminate the identified barriers.

b. Promotional materials and modification of agency brochures to include information about enhanced inclusiveness: An inclusion statement which welcomes people of all abilities to participate and a means for indicating a need for accommodations were added to all of the YMCA general and program-specific brochures and catalogues and to the MPRB center brochures and city-wide summer brochures by the conclusion of the project in June 1995. Camp Fire modified their recruitment flyers to include a statement encouraging youth of all abilities to participate.

Registration forms for the YMCA and MPRB also included an accommodation statement by summer 1994. If accommodations are indicated, the inclusion contact

person at the appropriate center is notified and contacts the registrant for further information. Camp Fire modified the registration card completed on recruitment night to include a place to indicate a need for accommodations.

The MPRB centers added art work and/or information on flyers and other supplemental promotional materials to demonstrate their commitment to inclusion and encourage people with disabilities to participate. As of 12/94, there was an inclusive "welcome poster", developed by the Including People with Disabilities Committee with project staff assistance, displayed at all parks.

Special promotional materials and presentations were used to inform the public about each agency's efforts to remove barriers to participation and become more inclusive, including:

- Press releases were sent to a comprehensive list of newsletters published by disability-specific organizations; a flyer was sent to the special education departments at local schools; and information was distributed through the Minneapolis CTIC (Community Transition Interagency Committee) and MPRB Commissioner/parent meetings.
- A special mailing was sent to agencies serving people with disabilities and local community newspapers in both Minneapolis and St. Paul to inform people about the inclusion efforts being made through the project.
- Articles about the efforts of the YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire to be more inclusive were published in a variety of newsletters and community newspapers, including Pacer, ARC Times, ICI Transition in Minnesota, Futurity, and the Delano Eagle.
- Project staff presented in collaboration with MPRB staff at the National Recreation and Park Association fall 1994 conference in Minneapolis. The topic was "An Inclusion Model for Community-Based Services", and the presentation described the steps taken by MPRB to make their organization inclusive for people with disabilities. MPRB and Vinland project staff developed a model for universal (inclusive) programming for this presentation which can be replicated by other organizations. A similar presentation for Minnesota park and recreation professionals will

be made by project staff on 9-28-95 at the Apple Valley Community Center as part of the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association fall conference.

c. Targeted mailings: To enable each agency to do targeted mailings to disability organizations and residences on an ongoing basis within their geographic area and encourage more people with disabilities to participate, project staff developed the following databases which can be sorted by zip code: disability organizations and residences, newsletters published by disability-specific organizations, and public school special education contacts.

A list of the zip code area served by each YMCA branch, MPRB pilot center/program, and the Camp Fire organization was developed, making it possible to generate specific lists for each individual branch or center to use for targeted mailings. These lists were distributed to the organizations so they can be entered into each site's mailing database; this will ensure ongoing communication between each center/site and the disability population within their geographic service area. In addition, a copy of the complete database, which includes approximately 700 entries, is included in the training manual which each organization received.

During mid-March 1995 project staff coordinated a special promotional/informational mailing of over 900 total pieces to each agency's geographic service area, using the databases that were developed for the project. An informative letter and list of inclusion contact names for each organization was sent to disability organizations; text for the letter was developed jointly by project and agency staff. In addition, a press release about the project and list of inclusion contact names was sent to disability-specific newsletters and community newspapers.

d. Significance: It is of no practical value to make a program accessible for people of all abilities if no one with a disability benefits from this by participating. Therefore, considerable project energy was dedicated to increasing public awareness and encouraging people with disabilities to participate in programs and activities at each organization. Efforts included identifying barriers to universal program participation, developing special promotional materials that highlight the commitment to inclusion, doing targeted mailings, and incorporating information about

inclusive programming into each organization's standard brochures and flyers. Each branch or center has a special disability database which can be entered into each site's mailing database to ensure ongoing communication between each branch/center and the disability population within their geographic service area.

It is critical that each organization not only feel committed to achieving universally accessible programming but also to actively marketing this accessibility to disability populations. The YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire are responsible for increasing the diversity of their usership, and that will not happen without ongoing efforts on their part to solicit and encourage people with disabilities to participate in their programs. The welcoming language now in each organization's registration forms and public relations materials, the welcoming posters and decorations in the buildings, and the capacity to reach out to disability populations with each routine mailing should ensure that "targeted marketing" occurs on an ongoing basis.

B.6. Benefits:

Although the overall recreational needs and interests of persons with disabilities are similar to those of persons without disabilities, special needs groups are under-represented in the typical recreational facility user population. Persons without disabilities often do not participate in recreational activities as much as they would like because of lack of time. In contrast, persons with disabilities, who often have an excess of time because of unemployment and isolation, do not participate in recreational activities because of barriers: non-accepting attitudes of others, concerns for personal safety, lack of information about resources and how to access them, transportation, fees, and accessibility.

Through the steps outlined above, community-based facilities offering recreational programming would communicate to the disability community that their services are inclusive and that they not only can but want to include persons with disabilities. This information would serve to enhance the comfort level and interest among persons with disabilities about participating in these programs.

C. Title of Objective: Resource Education for the Disability Community

C.1. Narrative: Persons with disabilities and rehabilitation

persons who live and/or work within each selected organization's primary service area will be educated about recreational resources: where facilities are located, how to access the programs, and the benefits of participation in recreational programs.

C.2. Procedures:

Identify sites for informational and motivational workshops within each selected organization's primary service area, making sure that each potential site is architecturally accessible and located on/close to a major transportation route. Priority locations would include housing complexes for seniors or persons with disabilities, advocacy or rehabilitation organizations, community centers, schools, and recreation facilities.

Set dates for approximately 15 informational and motivational workshops, with one-third taking place within each of the three selected organization's primary service area.

Develop and distribute promotional material about the workshops to encourage attendance.

Hold the workshops. Content will include:

- o a description of the programs/services/activities available at the selected recreational organization and how to access them
- o an explanation of improvements at the selected recreational organization to enhance inclusiveness of available programming and encourage participation by persons with disabilities
- o a discussion of benefits resulting from participation in recreational and leisure activities
- o a discussion of benefits both to persons with and without disabilities and to the community that result from inclusion

C.3. Budget:

a. Amount budgeted: \$35,000

b. Balance: \$0

C.4. Timelin

	7/93	1/94	6/94	1/95	6/95
Identify workshop sites			xxxxxx		
Set workshop dates			xxxxxxx		
Distribute promotional material				xxxxxxxxxx	
Hold workshops					xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

C.5. Status:

a. Workshops: It was decided to "bring the workshop to the people" rather than have the people come to the workshops, particularly given the mobility and transportation problems encountered by youth and adults with disabilities.

Several agencies serving people with disabilities were targeted as sites for informational and motivational workshops. In addition to disability-specific agencies, it was also decided to provide resource education through workshops and presentations to special education students, teachers, and/or parents at community schools to encourage youth with disabilities to access services and programs at the YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire. Project staff worked with Karen Erickson-Brandt and Mary Schuster, special education coordinators at Minnesota Department of Education, to identify which schools and teachers to meet with and arrange visits to the classrooms.

Following is a summary of the informational presentations that were held:

- PRI of Minneapolis (adults with developmental and physical disabilities): 12-12-94. (7 participants plus 1 staff)
- EPIC (adults with developmental disabilities): 12-15-94. (25 participants plus 5 staff)
- Oasis residence (adults with mental illness): 12-15-94. (10 participants plus 2 staff)
- Kelly Institute (adults with a dual diagnosis of mental illness and chemical dependency): 12-19-94. (18 participants plus 2 staff)

- PRI of St. Louis Park: 1-4-95. (10 participants plus 2 staff)
- Shelter Care for Girls: 1-10-95. (9 participants plus 4 staff)
- Opportunity Workshop II (seniors with developmental disabilities): 1-12-95. (12 participants plus 2 staff)
- Anderson Contemporary School: 11-22-93. (22 middle school special education students with cognitive, learning, or behavioral disabilities, plus teachers)
- Southwest Middle School: 1-6-95. (24 lead special education teachers)
- Northeast Middle School: 5-3-95. (20 students with mixed disabilities, plus teachers)
- Annwatin Middle School: 5-3-95. (10 students with developmental disabilities, plus teachers)
- Annwatin Middle School : 5-11-95. (10 students with physical and other health impairments, plus teachers)
- Webster Middle School: 5-16-95. (12 students with mixed disabilities, plus teachers)
- Jefferson Elementary School: 6-5-95. (54 students with mixed disabilities, including behavioral, plus teachers)
- River West Day Treatment Program: 6-14-95. (6 special education teachers specializing in severe behavior problems). Information was distributed in turn by teachers to parents at a school-sponsored event later that same day.

b. Additional resource education: To further encourage participation in inclusive recreation opportunities at the YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire by people with disabilities, information was also distributed in a more informal way through:

- Friends Together, a group of 130 adults with severe physical and/or cognitive disabilities from Minneapolis and St. Paul, on 12-11-94.

- The Minneapolis CTIC (Community Transition Interagency Committee) on 1-24-95. CTIC includes professionals from a variety of community organizations, including MN Center for Independent Living, Learning Disabilities Association, PACER, Project Enhance, Hennepin County Adult Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Opportunity Workshop, Dakota, AccessAbility, Access to Employment, Health Care Services, Minneapolis Community College, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis Public Schools, Transition Plus, YMCA, and several students/consumers.
- Vinland's Community Integration programs which serve a wide variety of youth and adults with disabilities. During January and February 1995, information was distributed to a total of 173 participants (with physical or developmental disabilities, mental illness, chemical dependency, or dual diagnoses) and 37 staff from 19 social service agencies.
- Pacer, a disability advocacy organization, on 3-27-95. Project staff met with the Pacer ADA specialist to discuss the project and ways to inform parents/students with disabilities about opportunities for inclusive recreational experiences. Article for Pacer newsletter was prepared.
- "Powerful Partnerships: Parents and Professionals Building Inclusive Recreation Programs Together", a workshop co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Center and the University of Minnesota, on 4-2-95. Project staff had a booth and talked with individual parents to provide information about inclusive recreation opportunities at the YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire.
- ARC of Hennepin County Family Forum ("Thinking Ahead to Summer --Recreational Opportunities") for youth with disabilities and parents on 4-19-95. The focus of this parent forum was to provide information on leisure opportunities available to individuals and families and how to access them. Opportunities available at the YMCA and MPRB were among those discussed.
- University of Minnesota undergraduate class in therapeutic recreation on 5-2-95. Project staff spoke with 30 students about the benefits of inclusion and project accomplishments.

c. Significance: In addition to preparing the MCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire to actively reach out to the disability community, it was imperative that people with disabilities and the professionals who work with them be educated about the benefits of recreational activities so they would be ready and willing to participate in the programming at these organizations. Accordingly, 15 "resource education" workshops were held and attended by 267 consumers (students and adults with disabilities), teachers, parents, and rehabilitation professionals. In addition, over 390 more consumers, professionals, and parents were encouraged through informal meetings, presentations, and forums to take advantage of the enhanced accessibility of programs at the YMCA, MPRB, and Camp Fire.

As a result of these efforts to encourage people with disabilities to access community-based recreational programming, potentially hundreds of youth and adults with disabilities will participate in programs and activities and be part of the everyday life in their community for perhaps the first time. People with disabilities will experience healthier, more well-rounded, active lifestyles and the emotional and physical benefits that result from that. The community, in turn, will benefit from the contributions, skills, and diversity added when people with disabilities become part of the community fabric. It is this type of casual intermingling between people with and without disabilities that, more effectively than anything else, promotes positive attitudes and comfort with differentness.

C.6. Benefits:

It is not enough for the selected recreational organizations to implement staff attitudinal training and program adaptations. For these efforts to have a "pay-off" in terms of increased participation by persons with disabilities, the disability community must be educated about these improvements. The informational and motivational workshops will heighten awareness among persons with disabilities about recreational resources, particularly those that are making a proactive effort to be accessible to diverse populations.

The benefits of participation in recreational activities have been well-documented. If persons with disabilities can be enabled and encouraged to have a fuller recreational life, the benefits would include increased self-esteem,

opportunities for normalizing social interaction and the establishment of friendships, improved physical fitness and stamina, and the development of specific leisure skills.

V. Evaluation

The effectiveness of this project during the FY93-95 biennium will be evaluated by its ability to: 1) document through pre- and post-testing an increased sensitivity to and comfort with persons with disabilities by the staff at the selected recreational organizations; 2) assist selected organizations in identifying and resolving barriers to participation in their programs for persons with disabilities; and 3) educate consumers within the primary service area of each selected organization about the enhanced inclusiveness of programs offered at each facility.

On a long-term basis, this project will be successful if: 1) there is a documented increase in the level of participation by persons with disabilities in the recreational programs at each selected organization; 2) there is an indication through feedback indexes of participant satisfaction with services at each organization and a way to resolve instances of consumer dissatisfaction; and 3) there is an ongoing commitment at each selected organization to uphold the improvements initiated through project activities and to maintain an inclusive environment.

VI. Context

A. It must be a priority to provide inclusive environments which allow and encourage the active participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of community life.

The passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has mandated that Minnesota's community recreation providers offer full access to a wide range of programs that gives persons with disabilities an array of choices and the right to choose. In addition to this legal impetus for inclusion, there are other compelling reasons. Inclusion provides persons both with and without disabilities the opportunity to interact and develop positive relationships. This is the most effective way to break down the attitudinal barriers that keep persons with disabilities on the fringes of our society.

Despite these legal, social, and humanitarian impetuses for inclusion, there has been minimal progress in the creation of inclusive environments in any area,

including the recreational area. In fact, a recent three-year research study at the University of Minnesota examined the state of integrated leisure programming in Minnesota and found that the majority of programming available through community agencies is not inclusive and that these agencies do not feel prepared to serve persons with disabilities.

Within this context of needing to provide inclusive services and feeling ill prepared to do so, the Vinland LCMR project would provide an easily replicated methodology to achieve an inclusive environment which allows and encourages the participation of persons with disabilities in community-based recreation activities.

- B. There is an increasing level of awareness on the part of community-based recreation providers of the need to address the issue of inclusion. Much of the effort put forth by providers to date, however, has been incomplete or ineffective and has focused on the provision of separate-but-equal adaptive programming that does not address staff attitudinal barriers or provide a system for proactive outreach to increase participation by persons with disabilities.

The Vinland LCMR project would supplement current efforts and capitalize on the interest in inclusion by preparing recreation providers to make all programs and activities they offer available to everyone, instead of separate-but-equal programming, and by addressing issues of staff training, documentation, evaluation, and outreach.

- C. Efforts in Minnesota to help community-based recreation providers build inclusive environments through systemic attitudinal change, staff training, and outreach have not been funded by LCMR in the past. Current Vinland LCMR funding for FY 91-93 will result in an adapted environmental education curriculum that will enable educators, rehabilitation, and environmental professionals to include persons with disabilities in the environmental initiative. The FY 91-93 project, however, does not address the need for across-the-board inclusive programming at recreation facilities. At this time it is not anticipated that further LCMR funding would be needed for the FY 93-95 project beyond that funding period. Further requests for LCMR funding would be dependent upon any need that would become apparent as we progressed in project activities.

I. Qualifications

1. Program Manager

a. Susan Rivard, Program Manager, is the Director of Rehabilitation Services at Vinland, a comprehensive rehabilitation center for persons with disabilities that is located on Lake Independence in Loretto. In this capacity she provides direct supervision to a multi-disciplinary team of rehabilitation professionals and designs, manages, and maintains the quality of day and residential rehabilitation programs for adults and youth with physical, cognitive, sensory, or emotional disabilities. The whole-person approach to rehabilitation at Vinland has included advocacy in the areas of inclusion, disability awareness, and staff training, all of which are incorporated into the LCMR project.

b. Susan is employed at Vinland and has a Masters degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling.

2. Cooperators/Other Investigators

a. Greg Lais, the founder and Executive Director of Wilderness Inquiry, will be a cooperator on the implementation of the LCMR project. Wilderness Inquiry is an organization that socially integrates persons with and without disabilities through the unique medium

of outdoor adventures. Activities range from outdoor education workshops to extended canoe, dogsled, and kayak adventures. In addition to serving several thousand persons in adventure activities, Wilderness Inquiry has received a Citation Award for outstanding service from the National Therapeutic Recreation Association and has been honored at the White House in recognition of its contribution to the betterment of American society. Wilderness Inquiry has made a significant impact in the areas of creating inclusive environments and promoting positive and accepting attitudes toward persons with disabilities.

b. Greg Lais is the Executive Director of Wilderness Inquiry and combines degrees in both psychology and marketing with experiential expertise in recreation programming and outdoor education.

VIII. Reporting Requirements:

Semiannual status reports will be submitted not later than January 1, 1994, July 1, 1994, January 1, 1995, and a final status report by June 30, 1995.