



Communicator

Special Edition - October 2010

Making connections across Minnesota

TCCVM becomes Open Access Connections

We are excited to announce that Twin Cities Community Voice Mail has changed its name to Open Access Connections.

After 16 years of providing voice mail boxes to people who are homeless and low-income, it became obvious that our name since 1994 no longer fits.

For one, we are no longer only in the Twin Cities metro area. There are 350 partner agencies across the state, including many in Greater Minnesota, offering voice mail boxes to their clients. This year we are exploring how to serve organizations in Fargo, North Dakota, and western Wisconsin, too.

Even the “voice mail” in our name isn’t entirely accurate. Yes, we do still provide 5,000 people a year with a voice mail number to connect them with vital services. However, in addition to that, we have investigated the viability of providing cell phones to users of voice mail through two cell phone pilot projects, advocated for cell phones to be offered in Minnesota as part of the federal Lifeline program, and looked into free internet access for low-income people. Once more, the name just doesn’t fit.

Over the past year, we have benefited from the expertise of Kazoo Brand-

ing. Tom Dupont and Abby Haddican learned the entire history of our organization and worked diligently to find a brand statement that best reflects who we are. Part of the process included choosing from among dozens of potential names.

After much thought, last month the TCCVM board of directors voted to adopt the new name. Open Access Connections says much about who we are and how we operate.

Not only do we strive to make our services available, but we do so to con-

nect the people who use our service with one another and the communities surrounding them.

The new logo developed for us by Kazoo reflects that engagement very well. Not only do the “O” and “A” in the logo symbolize dialogue, but also represent the fact that now is the time for people to interact with us.

While our name is new, our mission remains familiar and strong. Here’s to everyone having open access to many connections in our community.



Guests at our annual Walk and Picnic in September show off their new t-shirts with the new Open Access Connections name and logo. (Photo by Simon Carvalho.)

Open Access Connections

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Staff:

Marcy Shapiro, *Executive Director*
Harriette Darrough, *Training Specialist*
Terri Uravich, *System Specialist*
Ed Petsche, *Community Outreach Specialist*
Mark Erpelding, *Cell Phone & Outreach Projects*
Matt McLaughlin, *Central Minnesota Outreach VISTA*

Open Access Connections Board of Directors:

Debra Bean; Kim Carpenter; Simon Carvalho;
Charles Crowley, *Treasurer*; Ted Dennis; Anthony Elliot; Jim Ferguson; Doug Fountain; Tim Gothmann; Gloria Johnson; Ruth Johnson; Dale Johnston, *Secretary*; Mike Menner, *Chair*; Manuel Moore; Cheri Speeter Margoles, *Vice-Chair*; Brian Sullivan; Wayne Oliver; Aundrey Sanchez; Ann White; Dale Woodbeck

New name AND new website!

Open Access Connections is grateful to Tom Dupont and Abby Haddican of Kazoo Branding, who shepherded TCCVM through the process of developing our new brand identity.

In addition to the new name, we also have a newly redesigned website at www.openaccessconnections.org. We offer many thanks to Kate Huebsch, Christina Nguyen, and their whole team at High Point Creative, which oversaw the development and content of the website, along with Zimmer Madich, which designed the website; Jacob Schulke at J12 Media, who built and hosts our website; and Dale Woodbeck, a member of the Open Access board who provided photography for the website.

High Point Creative has long been a friend of TCCVM, and we look forward to their continued friendship with Open Access Connections.



Please support our work:

Open Access Connections relies on the financial support of many different segments of our community. While much of our annual budget is funded through government contracts and foundation grants, there is a growing need for the generosity of individuals, organizations and companies. This is only natural in these continued difficult economic days.

Government funding—no surprise—is in jeopardy at each turn. Foundations have been forced to restrict their giving to make up for hits their endowments have taken during the economic downturn. And we understand that for so many individuals these times are ones of necessary cost-cutting.

However, in times like these we are heartened by the tax-deductible donations from individuals, congregations and civic groups. Please use the form at right to make a donation to support our work. If you like, you may also donate securely online through giveMN.org, through our website, www.openaccessconnections.org. All credit cards are accepted there.

Thank you for your continued support.



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