



# News Brief – June 2009

Livable for a Lifetime

*Applying Universal Design  
in homes & communities*

## Updates

**Livable Home Tax Credit Expansion:** The 2009 Virginia General Assembly passed House Bill 1938 to increase the individual tax credit limit from \$500 to \$2,000 and the 25 percent amount for retrofitting to 50 percent for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2010. These changes encourage accessibility improvements by allowing the credit to cover an increased share of the cost. The Livable Home Tax Credit applies to retrofitting existing residential units to make them more accessible, regardless of whether an owner or resident has a disability requiring these visitability features. Homeowners incurring costs must apply to the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) by February 28 following the year in which expenses were incurred. Details concerning eligibility, requirements and process are available on the web site at [www.dhcd.virginia.gov](http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov) or by contacting Kathy Robertson at [kathy.robertson@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:kathy.robertson@dhcd.virginia.gov) or (804) 225-3129.

**Universal Design at Home Show:** The Disability Services Board (DSB) designed and built a display at the Blue Ridge Home Builders Association (BRHBA) Home Show April 10-12. The booth was staffed by members of the DSB and the L4L Steering Committee. The display offered education on universal design – the design of products and environments to be useable by all people – and visitability – the ability of a home to be visitable by people with mobility impairments. Materials included information from the Center for Universal Design ([www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/)), Concrete Change ([www.concretechange.org](http://www.concretechange.org)) and selections from the Universal Design collection available through the Jefferson Madison Regional Library.



**My Home for Life:** My Home for Life (MH4L) is a JABA-owned, subscription-based, service delivery business that helps seniors live independently in their own homes. Launched in 2007, MH4L inventories pre-qualified providers for everything from roofers to traveling vets; from bookkeeping, to lawn mowing. The MH4L staff connects a subscriber to the service provider with single phone call, and the subscriber has the security of knowing that the vendor has met the highest standards, including background employee checks and that current licenses, insurance and other credentials are up to date and in place. The feedback loop rates each transaction by the customer to ensure that only the best providers stay on the MH4L list.



**My Home for Life™**  
*Another JABA Venture*

As important as these services are, it takes more than a sound roof to keep seniors in their home. Sometimes it takes products as well. Bath lifts, an emergency response system, stair lifts, even the Jitterbug cell phone, all can help seniors to stay put. To meet this need, MH4L has launched an E-commerce store with a wide array of products and equipment, each reviewed by the MH4L staff for both effectiveness and its value. “Nothing has been more gratifying this past year, than to help our local senior members live independently, and to stay at home,” states

Chris Murray, business development director at JABA. “The My Home for Life Store” is a natural extension of JABA’s mission of “promoting, establishing and preserving sustainable communities for healthy aging that benefit individuals and families of all ages. The MH4L product line is available at [www.MyHomeForLife.com](http://www.MyHomeForLife.com), or through a link on the JABA website, [www.jabacares.org](http://www.jabacares.org). Each of the products is competitively priced, with a portion of the profits recycled back to JABA, to help offset the cost of services.

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*Designing homes and communities to be usable by all people regardless of ability or age.*