

# Resident Councils of Washington *FACTS*

## What is RCW?

Resident Councils of Washington (RCW) is a network of people living in long-term care facilities who have organized to both ensure and strengthen our rights; to support our and other residents' independence and sense of self-worth; and to promote and strengthen community values. Our network also includes healthcare professionals, educators, family members and friends who recognize that disability and or chronic illness does not mean inability. Our partnership is dedicated to maximizing the well being of persons living in long-term care facilities.



We are 24 years old and the only resident centered consumer based organization in the United States. We represent 27,000 residents in Washington and are developing a national network. States across the country are inquiring about how they enjoy our momentum. We are physically challenged but still want to contribute, to make a difference for our friends and others.

We have the opportunity to meet others, travel, represent our friends even in Washington DC and attend conferences.

We are continuing to utilize our skills, interests, beliefs, and passions with this organization

## Why do we exist?

- To create a community in which we are all respected for what we can contribute to our own quality of life
- To be the eyes, ears and vice of our friends, roommates and families
- To influence laws and regulations that affect our lives and living environment
- To provide opportunities for persons residing in long-term care facilities to live at their highest level of physical, social and spiritual well-being.

## How are we accomplishing our purpose?

- RCW represents residents' voices through legislation and policy development at the community, state and national level
- We sponsor resident-centered conferences, forums and events
- We develop educational and empowerment tools for residents, staff and facility ombudsmen
- We provide certification coursework and consultation in recreational, activity and social work departments within long-term care facilities
- We have produced"
  - The ultimate Resident Council Handbook
  - A heartfelt DVD, "The Resident Voice"
  - Two dynamic websites [www.residentcouncil.org](http://www.residentcouncil.org) and [www.residentcouncilstore.org](http://www.residentcouncilstore.org)
  - A resident-generated News Brief and other Resident Voice publications

## Why are we unique?

RCW is the only consumer-based statewide resident council in the United States. We influence positive change in nursing homes and assisted living communities. RCW networks and educates staff, advocates, family members and government officials.