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## AdaptZ.com Person of the Week



**Jim Lubin**

If you've done any research about disabilities on the Web, then you probably know Jim Lubin's name. Lubin created and maintains several web sites and discussion groups of interest to people with disabilities. These include: disAbility Information and Resources, which features hundreds of disability links; the Vent Users' Support Page, which includes helpful links and a vent users' email list; the Transverse Myelitis Association and the Transverse Myelitis Internet Club; the Quad email discussion group; and the Equal Access Café Chatroom.

Fascinated by computers since his teenage years, Lubin decided to find a way to interface with computers after developing acute transverse myelitis in 1988. His condition had left him completely paralyzed, dependent on a ventilator and requiring 24-hour care at 21 years of age. Because the ventilator hindered his speech, Lubin memorized Morse code and used the sip-and-puff method to access computer games while in rehabilitation. Eventually, Lubin was teaching his therapists how to use the games.

Lubin would have liked to use his computer skills in a regular job, but going to work would have meant losing his Medicaid benefits. Frustrated because he had always enjoyed hard work in his previous jobs, Jim found his calling in another way. He began to build web sites and online communities for people with disabilities.

Now 32, Lubin leads a fulfilling life and helps others through his work online. He has spent years researching transverse myelitis and has posted his work on the Web since 1996. Lubin's websites are so important because they enable people with quadriplegia, who are vent-dependent, who have transverse myelitis or other serious disabilities to connect with each other. Sometimes, due to the nature of some disabilities, people can feel isolated and alone, but Lubin knows that computers and the Internet are important resources for contact. He often answers emails letting people know that they are not "the only ones out there." It was for his dedication and work that Lubin was named New Mobility's Person of the Year in 1998.

Lubin lives in Bothell, Washington, with his mother Helena, who handles most of his care. Lubin credits Helena and his best friend and brother Joe with being his support network over the years. The closeness of the Lubin family, along with their mutual Catholic faith, has buoyed them through the struggles and difficulties of the financial, emotional and physical aspects of Jim's disability.

To check out the wealth of information and resources that Jim Lubin

has gathered online, please visit the following links:

disAbility Information and Resources

<http://www.eskimo.com/~jlubin/disabled.html>

Disability Chat Links

<http://www.eskimo.com/~jlubin/disabled/chat/index.html>

Equal Access Café Chatroom

<http://www.eskimo.com/~jlubin/disabled/accesscafe/>

Quad Email List

<http://www.eskimo.com/~jlubin/disabled/quadlist.htm>

Transverse Myelitis Association

<http://www.myelitis.org/>

Transverse Myelitis Internet Club

<http://www.myelitis.org/tmic>

Vent Users' Support Page

<http://www.eskimo.com/~jlubin/disabled/vent/>

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