



Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day



February 26th, 2020





2020 IDD AWARENESS DAY SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance Member Program Approved Service Agencies:

- A Better Life Experience, Inc. (ABLE)
- A Brighter Community
- Ability Specialists
- Activity Options
- Ariel Clinical Services
- Ascendigo Autism Services
- Behavior Services of the Rockies
- Belk Model, LLC
- Bethesda Lutheran Communities
- C.A.R.E., Inc.
- Colorado Autism Consultants
- Community Advantage
- Community Link
- Community Living Alternatives
- Community Support Services
- Continuum of Colorado
- Cottonwood Community Alternatives
- Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health
- Dungarvin Colorado, Inc.
- Dynamic Dimensions, Inc.
- Easterseals Colorado
- Elevated Supports
- Evergreen Service Providers
- FRIENDS of Broomfield
- Garden, Inc.
- Jewish Family Service
- Jordan Residential and Vocational Services
- Karuna Care Services
- Laradon
- Metro Support Services
- Mosaic
- Oliver Behavioral Consultants
- Overture
- Parker Personal Care Homes, Inc.
- Pueblo Diversified Industries
- Quality Life Services
- Rehabilitative Rhythms Music Therapy
- Sample Supports
- Schaefer Enterprises
- Stepping Stone Support Center
- Support, Inc.
- The Child and Family Therapy Center
- Thrive Community Options
- VitalCare
- Wellspring Community

Alliance Member Community Centered Boards:

- Blue Peaks Developmental Services, Inc.
- Colorado Bluesky Enterprises, Inc.
- Community Connections, Inc.
- Community Options, Inc.
- Developmental Disabilities Resource Center
- Developmental Pathways
- Eastern Colorado Services for the Developmentally Disabled
- Envision
- Foothills Gateway, Inc.
- Horizons Specialized Services
- Imagine!
- Inspiration Field
- Mountain Valley Developmental Services, Inc.
- North Metro Community Services
- Southeastern Developmental Services, Inc.
- Southern Colorado Developmental Disability Services
- Starpoint
- Strive

The Arc Chapters:

- The Arc of Colorado
- AdvocacyDenver
- The Arc of Adams County
- The Arc of Arapahoe and Douglas
- The Arc of Aurora
- The Arc of the Central Mountains
- The Arc of Jefferson, Clear Creek & Gilpin Counties
- The Arc of Larimer County
- The Arc of Mesa County
- The Arc Pikes Peak Region
- The Arc of Pueblo
- The Arc of Southwest Colorado
- The Arc of Weld County
- The Arc of West Central Colorado
- The Association of Community Living in Boulder

University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD):

- JFK Partners, University of Colorado School of Medicine

2020 IDD AWARENESS DAY AGENDA

7:45–8:45am **Check-In** **State Capitol, House Committee Room O109**

9:00am **Opening Ceremonies** **State Capitol, observe from 3rd floor galleries**

- Pledge in House: Krista Marquez from Douglas County
- Pledge in Senate: Thomas Barnes from El Paso County

Aprx 9:10am **Tribute** **State Capitol, observe from 3rd floor galleries**

- IDD Awareness Day Tribute sponsored by:
 - Senator Bob Rankin and Senator Rachel Zenzinger
 - Representative Alec Garnett and Representative Colin Larson
- (The Tribute will begin in the Senate and then move over to the House.)

Optional Activities after the Tribute in House and Senate

- Watch the House or Senate from the Gallery
- Visit with your legislator or their staff in their office or attend a committee hearing
- Take a tour of the Capitol (Public tours offered hourly 10:00am- 3:00pm. Self-guided tour materials are available at the tour desk on the first floor.)
- Legislative Bootcamp from 9:30–11:30am hosted by The Arc of Colorado on the 2nd floor of the McNichols Civic Center Building

11:15–11:45am **Lunch Check-In** **McNichols Civic Center Building**

McNichols Civic Center Building: 144 West Colfax Ave, Denver, CO 80202
If possible, please escort your local legislators from the Capitol to the Luncheon

NOTE: Transportation shuttle available as back-up. The transportation shuttle will circulate from 11:00am to approximately 12:00pm from the Capitol to the McNichols Building. The van will only run from the Capitol to the McNichols Building and will not be running after the luncheon. *Thank you to Continuum of Colorado for the use of their shuttle!*

Pick up: 14th Ave at Sherman St., south side of the Capitol
Drop off: North door of McNichols Building on Colfax

12:00–1:30pm **Luncheon** **McNichols Civic Center Building, 3rd floor**

- Welcome & Introductions begin promptly at 12:30pm
- IDD Awareness Day Speakers:
 - State Treasurer Dave Young**
 - Kiera Zink, Parent**
 - Mel Ruf, Ariel Clinical Services, 2019 DSP of the Year**
 - Kris Housel, Self-Advocate & The Arc of Weld County Board President**
 - Senator Rachel Zenzinger, 2019 Alliance Legislator of the Year**
- Presentation of the **2020 Direct Support Professional of the Year Award**

• **Join the conversation on social media using #COIDD and #ENDTHEWAIT** •

2020 IDD AWARENESS DAY SPEAKERS

State Treasurer Dave Young



A native Coloradan, Dave Young is honored, humbled, and excited to serve as Colorado State Treasurer. Dave taught math, science, and technology at Heath Junior High in Greeley from 1975 to 1999. He worked for two years as an information architect with iXL, an international Web design firm, and another two years as a coder for a small programming company in Colorado Springs that performed DoD programming for NORAD. For nearly a decade, Dave worked as a senior instructor for the Information and Learning Technologies program at CU - Denver.

He never planned to enter politics, but Dave's younger sister is challenged with significant disabilities and he could see the difficulties she had getting care. He learned his sister wasn't the only one struggling to get essential services, and decided to run for office to fix a system that was taking struggling to serve the most vulnerable in our society.

Appointed to the Colorado legislature from House District 50 in 2011, Dave was then elected to that position in 2012. He was re-elected twice more. Throughout his career, Dave has seen first-hand how pivotal education and training are for opening opportunities for people. That's why he was pleased to be appointed to serve on the following committees: House Public Health Care and Human Services; Education; Health, Insurance and Environment; Transportation; and Appropriations. In November 2014, Dave was appointed to the Joint Budget Committee and as the Chair of the House Appropriations Committee.

Dave earned his Bachelor's degree in Mathematics at Colorado State University, and a Masters in Information and Learning Technologies at CU - Denver. He is married to State Representative Mary Young, Ph.D.

Parent: Kiera Zink

Kiera Zink is a Mom and Advocate of her Deaf/Blind 5-year-old daughter with a rare disease called Wolf Hirschhorn Syndrome/4P-. Her advocacy work includes membership in the JFK Advisory Council, Littleton Public Schools Special Education Advisory Council, CO Department of Education Deaf/Blind Advisory Council and Parent Consultant to Foothills Parks and Recreation for the New Clement Park Inclusive Playground that opened in Fall of 2019. She manages the Zink Family Scholarship Fund that grants scholarships for individuals getting their masters in Special Education and Teachers of the Visually Impaired.



Self-Advocate: Kris House



Kris has been a member of the Board of Directors of The Arc of Weld County for over seven years and currently serves as the President. Kris has been highly active as an advocate for individuals with disabilities in Greeley for many years, including several years as a member of the Commission on Disabilities. He is active on many committees and workgroups. Kris also works at King Soopers as a Courtesy Clerk. Kris is the first to offer his help when something needs to be done. Kris especially loves going to the University of Northern Colorado's football and basketball games. Some advice Kris has for people with disabilities is, "You can do anything everyone else can do; just work hard, and you can accomplish anything." Kris is very excited to be heading to the Disability Policy Seminar in Washington, D.C. this March.

2020 IDD AWARENESS DAY SPEAKERS

2019 Direct Support Professional of the Year: Mel Ruf, Ariel Clinical Services

Mel Ruf and her family, including four brothers and one sister, moved to Grand Junction, CO when she was 12 years old to be closer to family. After graduating High School, Mel attended the Delta Vocational Training Center and received her CNA License and started her working career.



Mel started her journey with Ariel Clinical Services as a foster parent, fostering over 15 children and adopting her two sons and a daughter. Soon after the adoptions, she found herself a single parent. It was around this time that she also began her career as a Direct Support Professional in Ariel's day program, supporting individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, her life calling was soon fulfilled. Mel was instrumental in helping Ariel start paid work opportunities from selling hot dogs to making cookies. After a couple of years in the day program, she continued her DSP duties at an Ariel residential group home for difficult to serve youth. Her latest position at Ariel is in the Community Integrated Employment program with a focus on getting people to work community jobs with local employers and as naturally supported as possible.

Her dedication to her mission to help candidates obtain and maintain meaningful jobs and to helping solve companies' hiring problems is demonstrated through her long hours, weekends, early mornings, and late nights. Mel and her teammates were successful in placing 13 people, and counting, into community jobs

2019 Alliance Legislator of the Year: Senator Rachel Zenzinger

Rachel Zenzinger is the Colorado Senator from Arvada, representing Senate District 19 in Jefferson County. Senator Zenzinger grew up on the Western Slope and came to the Front Range to attend college at Regis University. She received both a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degree in Education, as well as her teaching license.



She has a deep background in education and a strong passion for public schools. She has worked as the Project Manager for Colorado Educator Voice Fellowship, a branch of America Achieves. She previously served as advisor to the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative program in the Colorado Department of Higher Education; and she worked for Regis University in the Master of Arts in Education department. Since moving to Arvada in 2002, Senator Zenzinger has served the community in a variety of capacities, including as twice-elected member of the Arvada City Council, where she also filled the role as Mayor Pro Tem and served on the DRCOG Board, the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District Board, and the Transit Alliance Board of Directors. She left the City Council to accept an appointment to the State Senate, where she served in the 2014 session. Upon her Election in 2016, Rachel returned to the State Senate, where she currently serves on the Joint Budget Committee, Chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee, and is Vice Chair of the Statutory Revision Committee. In 2019, Senator Zenzinger was named "Legislator of the Year" by Alliance and the Developmental Disabilities Resource Center.

2020 DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL AWARD FINALISTS

A Direct Support Professional (DSP) is a person who works directly with people with disabilities to assist them in living person-centered and self-directed lives in their local communities. DSPs assist in the daily living needs of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities at home, school, work, and other community places. They are advocates, coaches, teachers, and friends and often family to the people they serve.

Lisa Buhring

Mosaic Colorado Springs

Time with Mosaic: 20+ years

Years as a DSP: 20+ years

Lisa goes above and beyond with being innovative in individualizing supports. One gentleman she supported loved horses but due to balance issues, he had trouble working with them so Lisa and her husband bought him a Mini Horse he could care for at her farm. He took care of the mini horse with so much joy and attention, which improved his quality of life and gave him something to look forward to. Lisa also ensured there were always family albums in the home that she could share with him to keep him connected. Lisa and her family went out of their way to ensure their extended family was a part of his life as well. This individual attended all her family events and went to all activities that Lisa's kids participated in. Lisa's extended family were always there as natural supports for him as well. Lisa helped this individual make friends in the community when she joined a pool league with him. This meant a great deal to him and looked forward to seeing his friends every week.

Lisa focuses on each individual and their family's vision of what they would like to do in the future. Lisa supported this individual for more than 20 years. She included person centered thinking and planning in the care she provided long before this became a national initiative. This individual was a cowboy that loved a good old western movie and would tell Lisa about his horse every day! As the gentlemen she served began to decline in health, Lisa made sure he and his family knew they were a part of her family and that family sticks together through difficult times.

In 2018, he went to a nursing home for over a month due to an illness. At this point, Lisa had a new person living with her as well. She wasn't sure if she could handle watching him decline while also caring for the new person in her home. As Lisa began reaching out for providers to assist him, she broke down in tears and knew at that moment he must come home with her. For just over two months, he was back with Lisa and her family. She showed extreme compassion and commitment to both him and his family. She cherished the time with him because they had been through so much together. Lisa showed him photo albums, played classic country music, and called his sisters so he could hear their voices one last time. The day before he passed, he looked at Lisa with one clear blue eye and she told him "I love you and it was okay to go". He passed in the comfort of all who loved him and the people he loved. Lisa accomplished many things over the 20+ years she cared for her friend. All these years assisting him in living a meaningful life. Mosaic and Floyd's family are beyond grateful that Lisa crossed all our paths.

Kathy Hingtgen

Foothills Gateway, Inc.

Time with Foothills Gateway: 16 years

Years as a DSP: 18 years

A part-time employee of Foothills Gateway's SLS Direct program since 2004, Kathy has been instrumental in the successes experienced and quality of life attained by the many individuals she has worked with over the years. In a field where employee turnover can sometimes resemble a revolving door, Kathy's passion for the work she does has not waned. Her passion continues to pick up momentum and shows no sign of slowing down.

Kathy is efficiency and thoroughness personified. Kathy always does a thoughtful and vigilant review of the language used in an Individual Specific Support Plan to make sure that it is truly individualized and accurately describes the person's strengths and abilities using respectful, person-centered wording.

Kathy approaches all the individuals she works with with the same level of vigor and determination, regardless of their abilities. Whether she is assisting a blind man by cutting up his fruit or encouraging a woman to advocate in her own best interest while dealing with a complex illness, each situation is treated as though it is her top priority.

Someone Kathy supported was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia from the initial shock and what it might mean to her future, through the hours spent having treatments at the hospital, to the ceremonious ringing of the bell following her last treatment and the announcement that the battle was won. When they learned that the cancer had returned, knowing this person had Kathy's unwavering support significantly softened the blow. Always the motivator, Kathy is her biggest cheerleader and has plenty of strength to share.

2020 DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL AWARD FINALISTS

In another recent instance, when Kathy learned that an individual's employer, for whom he had worked for decades, was drastically reducing his hours, Kathy immediately consulted with all members of his team, including his case manager, vocational supports, family members and the supervisor who would be delivering the news to discuss the impact this reduction would have on the person and mitigate unnecessary stressors. She was at the meeting to support him and made sure he would not be scheduled the next day so that he would have time to absorb the news. She comforted him as he cried, holding back tears of her own.

She spends most of her days in overdrive, traveling from home to home, making sure that everyone else's needs are met, and they feel valued. Kathy would never describe her role as having involved sacrifice. Instead, she describes her work as a privilege, and gets great satisfaction in helping others to live their best lives.

Will Starks

Overture

Time with Overture: 5 years

Years as a DSP: 10 years

Will has been a Direct Support Professional at Overture's Day Program for five years. He previously operated a group home for youths with disabilities for five years. Will came to Overture to become a host home provider but was soon offered a position at our Day Program and has been immersed in his position ever since!

Will primarily works one-on-one with two individuals in Overture's Day Program in Colorado Springs. Prior to working with Will, these two people had very challenging behaviors. Many DSP's were not willing to provide support due to the behavioral concerns and physical aggression. However, Will accepted the challenge with an open heart and has seen great progress and break throughs.

He assisted one individual in pursuing his passion of art. After noticing the positive impact art had for this person, Will designated a room at Overture as his personal art gallery. Will encouraged him to create art every day. He also rallied everyone at Day Program to visit the art gallery weekly and give supportive feedback. This individual is now interacting with more people than before and has built wonderful friendships. His team has also seen his confidence increase, and he is more involved in creating and pursuing his goals. He trusts Will and communicates to him what he is feeling rather than engaging in physical aggression. He is now also participating in several small art groups in his community! Will has also built a wonderful relationship with this individual's father, who is his primary caregiver. His behavior has improved at home and his relationship with his father has grown.

Will consistently displays leadership skills through strong communication, integrity, and innovation. He is a model for his co-workers. While in the past he was the only staff person willing to work with some of our more complex participants, Will is changing that now. He has designed and executed trainings for his fellow DSP's on how best to support all individuals no matter how challenging. He makes such a positive impact on the people we serve as well as our team members, and we are incredibly grateful that he is a part of our team.

2020 DSP of the Year Award Honorable Mention Recipients

Nanette Dawson

Organization: Continuum of CO

Time with Continuum: 5 years

Years as a DSP: 20+ years

Samantha Owen

Organization: Inspiration Field

Time with Inspiration Field: 6 years

Years as a DSP: 6 years

Erica Hollins

Organization: PPCH

Time with PPCH: 5 years

Years as a DSP: 5+ years

2020 DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL AWARD NOMINEES

Community Advantage: **Ricky Colmenero**
Time with Community Advantage: 5 years
Years as a DSP: 5 years

Community Link: **Debbie Wedikind**
Time with Community Link: 10 years
Years as a DSP: 10 years

Continuum of Colorado: **Victoria Martinez**
Time with Continuum of Colorado: 3 years
Years as a DSP: 15+ years

Cottonwood Community Alternatives: **Mesfin Kelkile**
Time with Cottonwood: 4 1/2 years
Years as a DSP: 4 1/2 years

Cottonwood Community Alternatives: **Genet Beyene**
Time with Cottonwood: 4 1/2 years
Years as a DSP: 4 1/2 years

DDRC: **Douglas Love**
Time with DDRC: 7 months
Years as a DSP: 3 years

Dungarvin: **Cathy Slattery**
Time with Dungarvin: 11 years
Years as a DSP: 20+ years

Dungarvin: **Patricia Boakye-Yiadom**
Time with Dungarvin: 4 years
Years as a DSP: 11 years

Eastern Colorado Services: **Britney Donovan**
Time with ECSDD: 7 years
Years as a DSP: 7 years

Eastern Colorado Services: **Gidget Mathewson**
Time with ECSDD: 2 years
Years as a DSP: 2 years

Envision: **Andrew Harmon**
Time with Envision: 15 months
Years as a DSP: 15 months

Envision: **Joan Chapman**
Time with Envision: 15+ years
Years as a DSP: 39 years

Foothills Gateway, Inc: **Michele Weber**
Time with FGI: 11 years
Years as a DSP: 29 years

Imagine!: **Caitlyn Phillips**
Time with Imagine!: 7 years
Years as a DSP: 7 years

Imagine!: **Molly Collins**
Time with Imagine!: 2 years
Years as a DSP: 5+ years

Laradon: **Alexa Ahrendt**
Time with Laradon: 15 months
Years as a DSP: 8 years

Laradon: **Lauren Miller**
Time with Laradon: 2+ years
Years as a DSP: 14 years

Laradon: **Natalie Smart**
Time with Laradon: 5 years
Years as a DSP: 5 years

Mosaic Western Colorado: **Shaun Freeburg**
Time with Mosaic Western Colorado: 4 years
Years as a DSP: 36 years

Overture: **Emerson Aul**
Time with Community Advantage: 1 1/2 years
Years as a DSP: 4 years

Sample Supports: **Jason Torrez**
Time with Sample Supports: 2 1/2 years
Years as a DSP: 2 1/2 years

Sample Supports: **Wyetta Villagos**
Time with Sample Supports: 7 months
Years as a DSP: 7 years

Southern Developmental Services: **Blanca Canales**
Time with SDS: 4 1/2 years
Years as a DSP: 25 years

Southeastern Dev. Services: **Debbie Sharrar**
Time with SDS: 4 1/2 years
Years as a DSP: 4 1/2 years

Southern Colorado DD Services: **Linda Barrientos**
Time with SCDDS: 21 years
Years as a DSP: 21+ years

Starpoint: **Wayne Ferguson**
Time with Starpoint: 6 years
Years as a DSP: 6 years

Stepping Stone Support Center: **Matt McCalla**
Time with Stepping Stone: 1 year
Years as a DSP: 6+ years

Stepping Stone Support Center: **Jessica Landis**
Time with Stepping Stone: 1 year
Years as a DSP: 4+ years



HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR

Your legislators want to hear from you! Use these skills to become an IDD resource for the elected officials from your community.

Know who your legislator is!

Check out <http://www.vote-smart.org/> to find out who your legislator are - read their biography, voting history, and anything else you can find to get an idea of what's important to them.

Identify Yourself

Legislators meet and work with hundreds of people each day, but they love hearing from constituents. Tell your legislator where you live within his or her district. You can also mention the organizations to which you belong. Also, to add to your credibility, explain your experience on a topic by describing what you do and how long you've done it.

Know your issue

Before you communicate with a legislator, know what issue you are going to address and decide what you would like to get out of the email or visit (i.e.: a commitment to vote for or against a bill or you may decide the visit is simply informational).

Be Brief

A legislator's time is limited. So is yours. Have a 30 second version, a 5 minute version, and a 30 minute version of what you'd like to convey so you can be successful regardless of time allowed.

Be Specific

If appropriate, refer to a specific bill, the bill's title or short description, and where the bill stands in the legislative process. Ask for a specific action (for example, support, oppose, amend, further study, etc.).

Be Informative

Give reasons why a bill should be supported, opposed, amended, or further studied. Offer solutions if appropriate. To the extent possible, let them know how the legislation will positively or negatively impact people receiving services, the IDD system, your agency, or their district.

Be Courteous

Don't expect a legislator to be an expert on every bill. It's impossible. Each Session, hundreds of bills are introduced. If your legislator is not familiar with the bill you're talking about, don't be surprised or offended. It may be the first time they've heard about it.

Be Appreciative

Always be positive and polite. It's natural to be disappointed if your legislator doesn't vote the way you ask him or her to. But don't let one vote destroy your relationship. Remember, you're going to need their support on many other issues. Acknowledge your legislator's efforts and convey thanks for taking the time to listen to your thoughts, even if he or she is not supportive of your point of view.

Follow-up is important

Be sure to send a thank-you note or email after the visit. If commitments were made in your discussion, repeat your understanding of them. If staff members were present, write to them too. Staff can often be important allies. Leave any informational materials with your legislator in support of your stance on issue. After thanking your legislator for considering your concerns, express your willingness to answer further questions on IDD issues. Your goal is to serve as a long-term resource on all IDD opportunities and challenges moving forward.



Like you, we believe **EVERYONE** deserves the opportunity to live in and engage with their community!



That's why Alliance has spent over 45 years strengthening community services and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by collaboratively advancing innovative policies and practices.



Alliance is a nonprofit, statewide association of Community Centered Boards (CCBs) and Program Approved Service Agencies (PASAs).

Become an Alliance member by applying online at www.alliancecolorado.org

The Arc Colorado

Believes that all people in Colorado with developmental disabilities should have choices in how they live, learn, work, worship and play.

Find your local chapter @ thearcoco.org to learn more about how we can help.



Building capacity to respond to the needs of individuals with disabilities and their families.

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Colorado's University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCEDD)

- academic training
- continuing education
- interdisciplinary service
- community collaboration
- research
- information dissemination



THANK YOU to the vendors, agencies, and people who made this day possible:

- Goddess Catering
- Colorado Party Rentals
- Continuum of Colorado
- Alliance:
 - Josh Rael, Ellen Jensby, Kylie Kampbell
 - Emma Hudson Consulting, LLC
- Alliance Public Relations Committee
- The Arc of Colorado:
 - Christiano Sosa, Heidi Haines, Abigail Negley
- The Arc Volunteers
 - JFK Partners:
 - Sandra Friedman & Dina Johnson