



CALLING ALL ADVOCATES ~ May 2018

What's happening in the disability community in New Mexico

Unite in support of the **DDPC** goals of Advocacy, Capacity Building and Systems Change

The **Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC)** is interested individuals who include self-advocates, family members, professionals, employees and dedicated New Mexicans uniting for one mission. **New Mexico Developmental Disabilities Planning Council's** mission is to promote advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change to improve the quality of life for New Mexicans with developmental disabilities and their families. For more in-depth information on the **DDPC**, take a look at our council's five goals. **IPRA Requests** are sent to John Block, III at john.block@state.nm.us.

Recent DDPC COUNCIL News

The Council is seeking members from **outside the Albuquerque metro area**. All applications need to go through the Governor's website:

<http://www.governor.state.nm.us/>. On the website there is a drop-down box "Governor's Office" where you can chose "Boards and Commissions" and click on the line for "Apply for a Board Position." In the application, you can apply for the Council. The next DDPC Council Meeting is on Friday, **AUGUST 23 and 24, 2018**.

2018 SUMMIT ON ADVOCACY

Great Success!



- **Opening Plenary** "How Advocacy Gets Results" - An Entertaining Conversation Between Two Seasoned Advocates (Lindsay Sloan and Daniel Ekman)
- **Breakout Sessions** - Developed and Delivered by Academy Fellows (including people with disabilities and family members)
- **Artists Booths** - Original artwork and crafts for sale handmade by people with disabilities! Bring cash and enjoy great gifts!
- **Organizational Booths** - gather important information from disability organizations!
- **Drawings for Free Artwork and Crafts** - Opportunity to win and take home beautiful artwork and crafts made by artist featured in our Artist's Booths.
- **Networking** - Meet new friends from across the state and stay connected
 - **Dinner Buffet** - Enjoy a delicious dinner as you hear about what's happening with Advocacy across New Mexico

FEATURED NEW DDPC STAFF

- Holly Gonzales - Social Worker, DDPC/Guardianship Program



In May of 2014, I graduated from New Mexico Highlands University with a Bachelors of Social Work and am currently on the path to completing my Masters of Social Work, with a concentration in Clinical Practice.

I have always been drawn to the field of helping people and have 7+ years of experience working in the field of providing home and community based services for individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. I am the type of person who wants to help people achieve their innate potential.

Strengths that I bring to the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council are resilience, objectivity, motivation, eagerness to learn, and accountability. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to become a member of the team, I look forward to working with all of you!

Things that I enjoy to do on my free time include: binge watching Game of Thrones and other TV series as well as drinking a quality cup of tea!

Stories in Pictures:
DDPC Academy Graduation Spring Open

House on April 23



Guardianship Program Update:

The Guardianship Program is a statewide, publicly funded guardianship services program for guardians of last resort for income and resource-eligible incapacitated adults, when there are no less restrictive forms of intervention, such as a power of attorney or a decision maker designated under an Advance Directive.

The Guardianship Program staff continue to work diligently on behalf of all individuals needing Guardianship, but who fall between 200% of the Federal Poverty level. In addition to assisting with intake and providing legal assistance, compliance officers have conducted site visits to ensure that the individuals in the program are receiving the services they need. They continue to collaborate with contractors, agencies, courts and others to ensure that those who are at the point of last resort receive the Guardianship services they need. Their tireless work has positively impacted the lives of many individuals in our state.

They also continue to provide information and education about Guardianship. This includes information on what it means to be under a Guardianship, various alternatives to Guardianship that are less restrictive and how various events impact the lives of those with a Guardian and the Guardians themselves.

Recently, they have been busy with site visits to various Guardianship agencies and Protected Persons. They have also added new positions including an additional Compliance Officer, a Contract Specialist, and a Social Worker.

If you would like to request a **presentation on guardianship**, contact Maria Bourassa, Guardianship Program Manager at 505-841-4524 or maria.bourassa@state.nm.us.

Federal Program Update: The Federal Program projects directly relate to the current Five-Year Plan (2017-2021) developed and approved by the Council. The Plan is based on information collected statewide from New Mexicans with disabilities, family members, professionals and community members.

Funding for these projects is from the ***United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living/Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities***

(AIDD).

For example, the Federal Program funds the **Information Network** at the **UNM Center for Development & Disability**. The Network is a comprehensive information service to the New Mexico disability community through referrals to various agencies and by staff traveling across the state providing informational materials.

The Federal Program created a **survey** to identify **health services gaps** which is provided to **DDPC** federal program contractors to have project participants complete and return to **DDPC**, attached to the quarterly reports.

To see the Five Year Plan of the New Mexico DD Council, click [here](#).

Center for Self Advocacy (CSA) Update:



The **Center for Self Advocacy (CSA)** wrapped up its **Advocate Leadership Academy** last month. The final class, which included an OPEN HOUSE and Graduation, took place on April 23.

The **Advocate Leadership Academy** participants also unveiled their hard work at *Statewide Summit on Self-Advocacy* on April 18. Topics at the April 18 conference included ADA Compliance, Family Dynamics, Rights on the DD Waiver and Accessing Healthcare.

Videoblogs from the "See Me For Me" Event on March 26 were posted to DDPC's Youtube, Facebook and Twitter sites. They were used to promote the Open House and show examples of the types of leaders that have been a part of our **Advocate Leadership Academy** Program.

Many other events took place in the month of April. On April 10, staff conducted a transition presentation at *Vista Grande High School* in Taos. On April 11, an independent living presentation will be conducted at the **CDD**. On the same day, the final **CSA** staff attended the *Imagine Conference* on April 12-13 and participated in a presentation on Emergency Preparedness and Autism. **Parents Reaching Out Family Leadership Conference** on April 19-20. Program Manager Daniel Ekman attended the **Association of University Centers on Disability 2018 Disability Policy Summit**. He learned a lot of important policy information, found resources that could be shared with the community and visited

every New Mexico Senator and Representative in order to share the perspective of the disability community on various issues and build bridges with disability organizations in New Mexico.

NEW! CSA APPOINTMENT HOURS:

Do you need to talk with someone about an issue you are having or just want to meet with a CSA staff members. We are now accepting APPOINTMENTS on Wednesday from 2-5 pm open to meet with people. If you want to schedule an appointment, contact Daniel at 505-670-5698.

To schedule outreach events conducted by the CSA, contact Lindsay at 505-841-4571 or Lindsay.Sloan@state.nm.us.

Disability News & Upcoming Events

Contact [Daniel](#) to include your news and events



Congratulations to Jim Jackson, who recently retired as the Executive Director of Disability Rights New Mexico!





**Letter on the Regional Office Request for Intervention
(RORI) as a strategy for overcoming barriers to
employment.**

Click [here](#) to read the letter written by Community Inclusion Manager Carrie N. Roberts

VAMOS

Employment Preparation Program



VAMOS, a program by Mandy's Farm, provides customized employment services to individuals with developmental disabilities. Beginning summer 2018, VAMOS will be hosting an intensive 8-week employment training program for students interested in gaining skills for the workforce. This training program is designed to provide crucial pre-employment supports to transition age students (15-22), providing a spring board to the workforce.

Join us!

VAMOS will run from June 4, 2018 until August 4, 2018.

Program hours are Monday–Friday from 10am-4pm. VAMOS will be closed on July 4, 2018.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the VAMOS Employment Preparation program, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

- Aged between 15-22 years old
 - Diagnosed with a developmental disability
 - Not yet funded by the Medicaid waiver (traditional or Mi Via). Applicant can be on the waiting list.
- Able to commit to consistent attendance
- Committed to pursuing post-secondary education and/or employment

Services provided at no cost to the participant.

Funding provided by :



Preparing to Work

VAMOS strives to assist individuals in identifying, developing, and achieving their employment goals. Throughout the 8-week program, participants will engage in programs designed to prepare them for the workforce.

Job Exploration

- Resume & Vocational Assessment Building
- Discovery & Goal Exploration
- Job Fairs
- Job Site Tours

Postsecondary Counseling

- College Campus Tours
- Trade School Tours

Self Advocacy

- Benefits Counseling
- Consultation on Adult Services
- Mentoring with Employed Peers
- Assistive Technology Access
- Interview Skills
- Agriculture, Food Service, & Gardening Skills
- Soft Skills
- Networking & Professionalism
- Money Management & Banking
- Public Transportation
- Computer & Internet Literacy
- Customer Service

Work Based Learning

- 40 Hour Internship
- Workplace Shadowing

Workplace Readiness

- Interview Skills
- Agriculture, Food Service, & Gardening Skills
- Soft Skills
- Networking & Professionalism
- Money Management & Banking
- Public Transportation
- Computer & Internet Literacy
- Customer Service

How to Apply

Applicants will be reviewed on a first come first served basis. VAMOS believes that employment is for everyone, and welcomes applicants of any ability. Applications due by May 21, 2018. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance immediately after eligibility is determined.

To apply, please contact Program Director, Alex Luce, at alex@mandysfarm.org or 503-1141 ext.702.

SPACE IS EXTREMELY LIMITED.



www.mandysfarm.org



The following message is from Shantih Bisland-Naggan of UNM-CDD

We are delighted to bring you the FDIC's Money Smart Train the Trainer workshop on July 18, 2018, from 10 am - 12 pm, at UNM CDD. In this workshop, we will learn how to use the Money Smart curriculum with the individuals with whom we work.

Here is the description: Money Smart is a comprehensive financial education curriculum designed to help low- and moderate-income individuals outside the financial mainstream enhance their financial skills and create positive banking relationships. Money Smart has reached over 3 million consumers since 2001. Research shows that the curriculum can positively influence how consumers manage their finances, and these changes are sustainable in the months after the training.

We have opened up registration to our Metro SELL and School-to-Work Transition Alliance groups only for one week.

The workshop is free, but registration is required. If you wish to attend, please register by Thursday, May 3 to be sure you have a place reserved. After that date, registration will be opened up to other agencies.

Here is the registration link:

https://reg.abcsignup.com/reg/event_page.aspx?ek=0033-0021-235a539ea4104b74b03fdbb7401021b8

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you there.



Medicaid Telephone Identity Theft Scam Alert

The Following comes from the New Mexico Human Services Department Website

There have been reports of what appears to be an identity theft scam by callers claiming to be representatives of the New Mexico Medicaid program. These solicitors are calling individuals several times a day and asking for their name, Social Security Number and Medicaid number. Medicaid recipients should never provide personal information such as Social Security Number or Medicaid identification numbers over the phone to unsolicited callers.

These callers are not affiliated with the New Mexico Human Services Department, its Medicaid program, the Centennial Care managed care organizations, or the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

If you have received an unsolicited call from someone claiming to be a representative of the Human Services Department or the New Mexico Medicaid program, you may file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at <https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov>. If you have already fallen victim to this or a similar scam, please visit <http://www.identitytheft.gov>.

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Disability Awareness Curriculum Input Needed

The Office of the Attorney General, Outreach Division is developing a disability awareness curriculum. As part of this curriculum, the Office will

have a section on the website with stories from the community. If you would like to be a part of this project, please contact Amira Rasheed, A.Rasheed@nmag.gov, 505-717-3584. Click [here](#) for more information on this project.

Know Your Rights

A coalition of interested New Mexicans is working on the **Know Your Rights** campaign which addresses the CMS Final Rule and rights of individuals with disabilities. The Final Rule amends the regulations which govern the Medicaid 1915 (c) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver programs. These rules are an important step forward in federal policy, supporting inclusion and integration of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the community.

Message from *Ocate Cliffs Retreat Center and Autistic Workspace*



For two weeks from June 17 to July 1, there will be a work retreat held at *Ocate Cliffs*. You can come and help build Ocate Cliffs retreat center while being in an autistic workspace. This year we are combining our traditional autistic focused retreat with an international camp. Up to 10 volunteers from around the world are invited through Volunteers for Peace.

For more information on the event, go to
<http://www.divergentlabs.org/ocatecliffs/volunteer/work-retreat-june-2018/>

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Association of New Mexico 26th Annual Conference



The *Psychosocial Rehabilitation Association of New Mexico (PSRANM)* has contributed to an unwavering effort to use more effective and lower cost alternatives to long-term institutionalization over the past 30 years. They are having their 26th Annual Conference from June 13-16. This conference has a very specific focus on people in recovery and the providers that support people to maintain recovery and build resiliency. This year's conference we are focusing on: Healing, Growing, and Building Together: From Illness to Wellness. The early bird registration deadline is April 30, 2018.

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They are seeking awards nominations for someone that has made a difference in the lives of others and/or the behavioral health field of recovery. The nominations are due by April 1, 2018. To learn more about the awards and how to submit nominations, click [here](#).

The deadline to sponsor the conference and receive a free table is April 30, 2018. Click [here](#) for a sponsorship packet.



Support Group for LGBTQ people with disabilities

1st and 3rd Thursday of each month
6:00pm-7:30pm

[Learn more.](#)



Cultivating Coders

provides rural Native communities with world-class Computer Science education.

[Learn more.](#)

Martial Arts classes at the Mountain Dojo 319 Mountain NE Albuquerque

For Itty Bittys, Kids, or Adults on Thursdays. [Learn more.](#)

Resources

"Health and Safety for Caregivers" four-hour training. The topics include workers rights, preventing infection, and Musculoskeletal Safety. The class is free to agencies and caregivers. It can be provided at an agency location and a time convenient to the agency and caregivers. Click [here](#) for a flyer with more specific information. If you would like to arrange a training, call Pamela Stafford, M.A., CESP at 505-710-9680.

Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) worked with providers, advocates, and other stakeholders to develop a Provider Data Summary that makes key data about providers available to the public. [Learn more.](#)

From the New Mexico Crisis and Access Line: [Information in English and Spanish](#)

Following Tip Sheet on ABLE is presented by the **Information Network**, which is funded by the **NMDDPC** and administered by the **University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability**.

ABLE Act – Accounts for Persons with Disabilities Act

New Mexico

What is the ABLE Act?

The ABLE Act is a federal law that allows eligible people with disabilities to open an ABLE investment and savings account. The "Bank Safe" option is a saving account and there are four investment options available. They range from aggressive to conservative (Growth, Moderate Growth, Conservative Growth, and Income Options). It allows a person with a disability to save money without losing eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and other programs. The money in this account may be used for qualified disability-related expenses.

Why open an ABLE account?

Many people with disabilities rely on Medicaid, SSI, and other public programs. To qualify for these programs, someone generally must have a low monthly income and no more than \$2,000 in countable assets. The ABLE Act allows a person to save more than this usual asset limit in an ABLE account without losing these important benefits, and to use those savings to pay for qualified expenses related to his or her disability.

Who is eligible?

An eligible person is someone whose disability began before the age of 26, and who has been living with their disability for at least one year, or expects it to last for at least a year. The applicant must also meet one of the following criteria:

- Be entitled to SSI because of their disability
- Be entitled to Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) because of their disability
- Have a condition listed on the Social Security Administration's List of Compassionate Allowances Conditions at www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm
- Self-certify their disability and diagnosis when opening an ABLE account.

How can someone open an ABLE account?

The ABLE account process is online. Visit www.ablenewmexico.com to register and open an account. Enrollment is free; however, a minimum deposit of \$50.00 is needed to open an account. Any deposits after that can be as little as \$1.00. Currently, there is a \$3.50 fee per month to have an account. There is also an asset fee between 0.19% and 0.34% depending on the options chosen. Any earnings on the account are free of state and federal taxes.

Key facts:

- Anyone, such as a family member or friend, may contribute to the account.
- Up to \$15,000 may be put into an ABLE account each year. More than one person can contribute, but the total contributions from all sources is limited to \$15,000 per year.
- If the beneficiary is employed, the maximum yearly contribution is \$27,060 per year.
- If the total amount in the ABLE account exceeds \$100,000, then SSI benefits will be suspended until the amount in the account drops back down to \$100,000 or less.
- ABLE account funds do not affect eligibility for Medicaid, SSI and other programs.
- ABLE account funds must be spent on costs related to living with a disability.
- Disability-related expenses may include health care, education, housing, personal support services, transportation, employment training, assistive technology and other services.
- If Medicaid benefits were used while an account is open, it may be possible for Medicaid to seek repayment after a person's death. However, there are a number of things that the account can be used for before Medicaid could be repaid, such as funeral costs. Be sure to ask for more details.



State of New Mexico
ABLE Program

www.ablenewmexico.com

ABLE National
Resource Center
202-296-2040
www.ablenrc.org/

Questions?

Call the CDD
Information Network

1-800-552-8195

or visit our website at
www.cdd.unm.edu/infonet

Informational Tip
Sheets:
www.cdd.unm.edu/infonet/tip-sheets.html



Disability Rights New Mexico is looking for participant for two boards

The first board is the Disability Rights New Mexico Board of Directors.

The second board is for the Mental Health Advisory Council.

For more information on these boards and to apply, go to www.drnmx.org

MAY CALENDAR of Events

Contact 505-670-5698 to include your upcoming events.



May 7-8

Assistive Technology Conference (ATC 18)
Sheraton Uptown Hotel
Albuquerque, NM

For more information, click [here](#)



May 9

Hearing Loss Technology Conference
Sheraton Uptown Hotel
Albuquerque, NM

For more information, click [here](#)



RIO GRANDE
DOWN SYNDROME
NETWORK

May 20

Under 7 Playgroup
11:00-1:00 pm

For more information, click [here](#)



May 21
Service Animals: What You Need to Know
Cornerstone Church
Las Vegas, NM
3:00 - 5:00 PM
Click [here](#) for more information



May 22
Service Animals: What You Need to Know
Taos Youth and Family Center
Taos
3:00 - 5:00 PM
Click [here](#) for more information

**Center for
Self Advocacy**

Exciting news and upcoming events at the **New Mexico Center for Self Advocacy:** [Keep up with our calendar of future events here.](#)

The **Center for Self Advocacy** has continued outreach to various schools. If you want **Center** staff to present at a school near you, contact Lindsay Sloan at Lindsay.Sloan@state.nm.us or 505-841-4571.

**Guardianship
Program**

The **Guardianship Program** is a statewide, publicly funded guardianship services program for guardians of last resort for income and resource-eligible incapacitated adults.

The **Guardianship Program** provides guardians, legal services for court proceedings and even

Federal Program

The **Federal Program** addresses five key areas including self-advocacy, education and early intervention, leadership/quality assurance, community action and support and employment.

The organizations funded through the **Federal Program** and others are supported by federal and state

trained Mental Health Treatment Guardians.
[Learn more about the essentials here.](#)

funding [Learn more here.](#)

[Visit us and learn more!](#)

Stay Connected  

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