



The Utah Developmental Disabilities Council

People Who Have Benefitted From the Work of the Utah DD Council

Through leadership skills developed as appointed members of the Council, Utah has developed many recognized national and state leaders in the disability community.



Eric Stoker is the Vice-Chair of the Council. As part of a pilot People First group at South Valley School, Eric learned leadership skills and the confidence to run a successful meeting. Eric holds three part-time jobs plus his many volunteer responsibilities. Eric was recognized as the 2014 National Champion of Equal Opportunity Award in Washington D.C.



Jennifer Kuhn is the Chair of the Council's Education and Employment Committee. As a result of her experiences as a Council member, Jennifer and her husband started a restaurant that primarily employs people with disabilities in Utah County. She also started her own support brokering business for which she was recognized as "30 Women to Watch" in 2013 by the Utah Business Magazine. Jennifer is extremely creative and has helped many people with disabilities get jobs. Jennifer is the mother to three children, two of whom have disabilities.

(SEE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE...)

Councils on Developmental Disabilities are located in every State and Territory in the United States. They represent a Federal-State partnership in developing futures for and with people with intellectual / developmental disabilities and their families. Councils are governed by citizen volunteers who are appointed by the Governor. More than 60% of these citizens must be people with developmental disabilities or family members. In this way, the "customers" of the service system direct the Council's activities.

Councils are charged by Federal law to identify the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities in their State or Territory and to develop innovative and cost effective ways to meet the needs in a manner that upholds the human and civil value of people with developmental disabilities. The Utah DD Council works to promote the independence and productivity of people with developmental disabilities and promote systems change that will eliminate obvious inequities in areas such as employment, education, and access to healthcare. The Council works to create a community where people with developmental disabilities are included and where they can enjoy the same civil liberties and quality of life as everyone else. In 2014, the Utah DD Council received \$638,862 in federal funding authorized under the Developmental Disabilities Act to support its work.

Why Utah Needs a Strong Council

Before the Developmental Disabilities Act passed in 1970, families received almost no help, children could not attend schools and many people with developmental disabilities were sent to State institutions for life. Since then, Councils have helped to bring about some remarkable changes:

- Society now expects children with developmental disabilities to grow up in families and that families will receive needed supports. Over 5 million Americans have developmental disabilities (severe, lifelong disabilities such as cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, intellectual disabilities that manifest at birth or before age 22).
- Over 50,000 people in Utah have a developmental disability.
- Children with developmental disabilities are going to school, often in their own neighborhoods.
- People with developmental disabilities have the highest unemployment rate of any group of Americans: up to 80% of people with developmental disabilities are not employed.



Kayci Lynam is the Chairperson of the Leadership Committee and was just elected to serve as Vice-Chair of the Council. Kayci is active in People First of Utah and is continuing to grow her leadership skills by being a selected to present a break-out session during the National Self Advocates Becoming Empowered Conference in October 2014 in Oklahoma City. Kayci was also recently elected as the Utah Transit Authority Planning Subcommittee Vice-Chair!



Elsie Dee is serving her second term as an elected San Juan County School Board Member. Elsie gained confidence from serving on the Council and she is very involved in her community and serving on other boards and leadership positions with the Navajo Nation. Elsie is currently working as an Asset Based Community Development project community builder to restore Navajo traditions and strengthen the community including people with disabilities. Elsie is a parent of a young man with disabilities.



Bryon Murray, former Council Chair, is currently serving as the President of the National SABE (Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered) Board. Bryon has been involved in the local Roosevelt self-advocacy movement. He is a graduate of the Council sponsored training Partners-In-Policy Making and he has run twice (unsuccessfully) for Roosevelt City Council. He experienced a brain injury at 3 when he was run over by a hay wagon.



Kelly Holt, former Council Chair, lives in Price. When she was appointed in 2003, Kelly wasn't connected to her community. Through skills and confidence developed while serving on the Council, Kelly gained the courage to secure her own job rather than spend years waiting for services. Kelly's leadership qualities were recognized by National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities recognized Kelly as their 2011 CEO (Champion of Equal Opportunity) Award winner! Kelly is the President of People First of Utah.

- Many people with developmental disabilities remain on long waiting lists for services and benefits (approximately 1,700 in Utah.)

Recent Utah DD Council Accomplishments

- Abuse occurs within the disability population at a much higher rate than for people without disabilities. To help with prevention, the Council is partnering with Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities and the Disability Law Center to provide education to individuals, families, support staff, and law enforcement. In 2014, over 350 people received training on the specifically adapted safety curriculum.
- A current Council goal is to increase postsecondary opportunities for youth with intellectual disabilities who are transitioning into adulthood and the work force. As a result of the Council's advocacy, the 2014 Legislature appropriated \$100,000 to the Utah Colleges of Applied Technology to provide scholarships and supports to people with intellectual disabilities.
- An emphasis on 'Employment First' in Utah is focusing our efforts on competitive, integrated employment. With an increase in access to education and the development of job skills, the expectations for youth with disabilities are to be employed and a contributing member of their community!
- The Council is funding a community driven project in partnership with St. Christopher's Episcopal Navajo Mission in Bluff. This project is centered on a community garden and will support community members in learning traditional Navajo gardening techniques, healthy eating, and support the development of small businesses like selling crops and drying foods.
- The Council provided the first 3 years of start-up money to support the development of the infrastructure of Utah Works (the management to help private companies obtain state contract jobs.) As a result, people with disabilities are working in state contracted jobs all across Utah!
- The Council awarded \$150,000 start-up money to partner with Uintah Basin Organization of Governments. May 2011 marked the introduction of the bus route between Vernal and Duchesne! Transportation accessibility is critical for people with disabilities, especially in our rural communities.
- Language Matters! Council member, Rep. Paul Ray sponsored a bill that was passed to replace all disrespectful disability language like "mental retardation" with "intellectual disability" throughout all Utah Code!

To learn more, visit:
Utah Developmental Disabilities Council
www.utahddcouncil.org