

The Alliance News



Operation: Community Access

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Vision

Our vision is for self-advocates to work together to get the support we need to live the life we want in the community.

Mission

Our mission is to speak up for ourselves and each other while working together to make changes in our communities and in Illinois.

The Alliance is proud to be an Initiative of the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities

Election Day
Tuesday, November 8, 2016



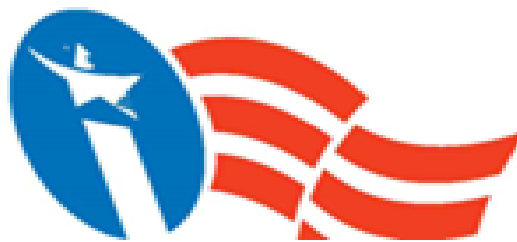
Your Vote is Your Voice
Speak Up and Speak Out!

Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance

PO Box 666 Park Forest, IL 60466 618.806.9431

Email: krescenebeck@gmail.com Website: www.selfadvocacyalliance.org

Find us on Facebook at Illinois Self-Advocacy Alliance



VOTERS WITH DISABILITIES HELPLINE

On **Tuesday, November 8, 2016**, the General Election, [Equip for Equality](http://equipforequality.org) will have advocates available by telephone to answer questions about any voting problem you may experience.

Call: 1.800.537.2632

TTY: 1.800.610.2779

Email: Voting@equipforequality.org

6:00 am to 7:00 pm

Equip for Equality is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the human and civil rights of children and adults with disabilities in Illinois.



The Alliance Staff Contact Information

Megan Norlin, Advocacy Coordinator
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Leanne Roth, Organizational Coordinator
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Lawrence Hunt



Michael Johnson

At the October 31, 2016 Alliance Board of Directors meeting, retiring board members Lawrence Hunt and Michael Johnson were honored for their years of service.

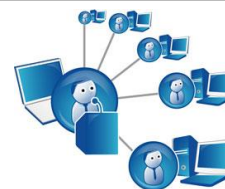
Lawrence Hunt is a member of Ray of Hope Self-Advocates (ROHSA) in Chicago Heights, Illinois. He has served on the board of directors for four (4) years. Michael Johnson is a member of Speak Out QCA in Rock Island, Illinois. He has served on the board of directors for four (4) years and was Vice President for two (2) years. Michael was also active on the Operation: Community Access campaign Steering Committee.

Thank you, Lawrence and Michael, for serving on the board and continuing to speak up and speak out!



Did you miss The Alliance's "Your Vote Counts" webinar on Tuesday, October 18, 2016?
No worries...we can send you the recording!
Just e-mail Krescene Beck at krescenebeck@gmail.com,
and put Your Vote Counts in the subject line.

Speak Up and Speak Out Summit Recap Webinar!
Tuesday, November 15, 2016 10am CST



Led by Tara Wickey, The Alliance's Community Organizer, this webinar will feature a recap of the Speak Up and Speak Out Summit as well as an opportunity for participants to give feedback on how to make it even better next year!

Please register for the webinar at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7936408342712850444>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

**The Alliance Welcomes Kimberly Mercer-Schleider
as the new director of the
Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities!**



Director Mercer-Schleider was recently interviewed by Alliance Self-Advocate Leader Kimberly Estes.

Where do you want self-advocacy to be in 5 years?

I hope policy makers are asking individuals with disabilities what they think about policies, rather than asking other groups. I want to see self-advocacy groups that are organized to be more present to speak to legislature. I want the first thing legislators think when making policies is to talk to advocates. Illinois should have more self-advocates be empowered and to stand up for what's important; also reaching out to self-advocates to help them find advocacy groups.

What are your specific plans regarding self-advocacy for the next year?

On behalf of the Council on Developmental Disabilities, I will continue to fund the Alliance so we can reach our goals and continue to have good group leaders. I also want to understand how other states are organizing their self-advocacy groups to see some things we might want try...things that have worked for the groups.

What did you do before you took this position and do you like your new role?

I was a Transition Manager for Chicago Public Schools. There are 22,000 students with disabilities in high school alone in Chicago Public Schools. I enjoyed that work, but when this new position came up it was something that I am passionate about. Regarding how she likes her new role, "I love it!" "I have learned so many things and am excited to put all the pieces together. It brings everything together that I care about working with self-advocates."

What is your college degree?

Bachelors in Special Education
Master in Special Education
Master in Non-profit Administration
Laughing, she also said, "and a lot of student debt."

Do you have experience working with self-advocates?

"I do. I have worked a lot with individuals with disabilities when I was a teacher at the Center for Independent Futures." I helped people move into apartments so they could have more independence. While at Chicago Public Schools I advocated for individuals to speak up at the own IEPs.

Just for fun....do you like game shows?

"I absolutely love game shows." I also like Family Feud and Wheel of Fortune, and reality competition shows like the Voice.

How long do you plan to stay in your current position?

"As long as they will have me. There's a lot of work to do...enough work for me and 20 of me to do."



The Possibility of People

The Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities is pleased to share a new resource created through one of the “Life Like Any Other” projects. What began with the question “how can we support more people to be in valued social roles outside the boundaries of disability services” evolved into this valuable resource.

Check it out at www.illinois.gov/icdd/Documents/Possibility-of-People-Guide.pdf



The Next Phase of Self-Advocacy

The Board of Directors (Michael Johnson, Melissa Justus) and staff of The Alliance (Sandra Clymo, Kimberly Estes, Megan Norlin, Tara Wickey) talked about the exciting plans for the next phase of self-advocacy in Illinois! Besides discussing next steps, participants shared what they thought as ways of furthering the self-advocacy movement in Illinois were shared.



People 1st Aktion Club in Jacksonville had a booth at Speak Up and Speak Out, sharing information on self-advocacy and their Aktion Club as well as voting.



Woo Hoo..I’ve Got a Job Interview! Now What?

Nathan Joerndt and Krescene Beck led this interactive session as they shared tips and tricks for success including resume’ writing, interviewing skills, questions to ask the interviewer, and dressing for success. They even had a special guest ~ a Human Resources staff from Wyndham City Centre Hotel ~ sharing about what she looks for in a person applying for a job!

Be a Part of Advocacy in Action by attending your local Advisory Council Meeting**North Suburban**

To Be Announced
Community Alternatives Unlimited
8765 W. Higgins Road
Chicago, IL

North Central

Tuesday, December 6, 2016
10 – 10.30am
By Conference Call Only

Northwest

Tuesday, November 15, 2016
4.30pm
Milestone Training Center
4504 Shepherd Trail
Rockford, IL

City of Chicago

To Be Announced
UIC's Institute on Disabilities and Human Development (Auditorium)
1640 W. Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL

Central Region

To Be Announced
DHS DDD - Centrum Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room
319 East Madison
Springfield, IL

Southern Region

Wednesday, November 16, 2016
10.30am
Bel-Air Bowl (downstairs meeting room)
200 South Belt West
Belleville, IL

South Suburban

Thursday, November 17, 2016
2pm
Suburban Access
900 Maplewood Avenue
Homewood, IL