



*Building Awareness & Advocating Change for People with Disabilities*

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## A Year of Reflection

by Madison Morgan

2022 has been a flurry of activity here at Summit, and as we reflect on this past year, it is incredible all that we were able to achieve with the help of supporters like yourself.

Because we did so much, it's best to break it down month-by-month, so here goes:

January, we were honored to be selected as one of six nonprofits to join the Park Side Credit Union Partner Program. Thanks to Park Side for helping to make many of our events of 2022 successful, we are so excited to continue our work with them into the future. Special shout out to Deb Stapley-Graham, a Park Side Rock Star and Missoula Favorite!

We started February with a bang at Beehive Homes with a rally to call attention to COVID-19 policies that prevented residents from being able to leave or have someone come in from outside to be able to get their vaccination. Our protest made the front page of the Missoulian and seemed to inspire small, but positive baby steps toward a more reasonable approach to ensuring individuals had access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Summit's Kalispell office was also the recipient of a \$250 Nonprofit Development Partnership Fund grant from the Whitefish Community Foundation.

Summit partnered with the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) on Project ALIVE, which was carried out by our crew and Ronan and focused on working to improve COVID-19 vaccine equity among minority populations by partnering with local and tribal health professionals

in conducting outreach in the Lake and Sanders County areas.

We ended the month on a sweet note, giving away free coffee from Hunter Bay Coffee Company during the week of Valentine's Day to passersby on South Russell Street, spreading love, joy, and of course, caffeine!

In March, we kicked off the biggest part of our Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation grant, which allowed us to expand on existing BASE programming, such as Yoga and CHEW (Cost-effective Healthy Eating Workshop), and the opportunity to implement new programming, such as Film Making and Art Club. Yoga classes were held three times a week during the spring and fall and we offered a total of 10 CHEW classes throughout the year with between four and seven people attending each session these two classes. As you can tell, these new programs have been very popular, and our plan is to continue them into the New Year with the same success.

April, we welcomed Tami Hoar as our new Executive Director. Tami joins Summit with decades of Independent Living experience under her belt, a fresh outlook, and a strong vision to help Summit continue to succeed and grow. With Tami at the helm, there is a renewed excitement for the future of Summit and Independent Living in Western Montana.

We also partnered with Gravity Media Productions to create a short film about Summit to spread awareness for Missoula Gives. The video footage captured with this partnership will also help us

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## A Year of Reflection continued...

create future videos and helped us to advertise for the first ever BASE Film Extravaganza, where a series of short horror films, created, directed, and filmed by BASE participants, were shown on the silver screen at the Roxy Theater. The event drew a huge crowd, and the community interest in this project has only grown with each new iteration of film making.

We saw huge success in May, as our donors raised \$11,257.00 during Missoula Gives, 7.2X more than the previous highest amount raised! We have nothing but gratitude toward our dedicated supporters who came in droves on the big day.

Our Kalispell crew set up a booth at the Northwest Montana Veterans Stand Down & Food Pantry's Veterans Appreciation Day Barbecue in Kalispell with where we were able to provide information about Summit to veterans, their families, and other veteran service providers.

June saw a return of the ADA Picnic, which occurred the same day as the BASE Showcase. The community was able to check out a variety of adaptive recreation equipment while feasting on sandwiches and would later be wowed and dazzled as BASE sang, danced, and performed the night away.

Summit's Ronan crew participated in a CSKT Tribal Health event called Walk Your Mocs with a Doc, which helped to build awareness and a sense of community for our consumers and community members on the Flathead Indian Reservation.

July was probably our busiest month of the year, as we tabled every Wednesday in Caras Park for Out to Lunch, and once for Downtown ToNite. We loved getting to chat with members of the community, while also eating from one of the many wonderful food trucks that came each week.

The BASE Collective revealed their mural, "Dreamscapes of Disability," at the Allez! alleyway display. This incredible four-part piece depicts disability throughout history, past, present, and future. The mural has inspired the local Missoula arts community to include all levels of accessibility into their art for all to enjoy. Hamilton's Art Expressions

group, which meets weekly for arts, crafts and friendship, also reconvened after a long hiatus caused by COVID.

Summit was voted the #1 Best Assisted Living/Independent Living Center. While we are not in assisted living entity, this award allowed us to flip the narrative on what independent living really means as it relates to individuals with disabilities. We were also fortunate enough to be voted #2 for Best Activist, and #3 for Best Nonprofit. Thank you to all who voted! We are so honored to have placed in each of these categories.

BASE worked hard in August to prepare for the Roxy's Camp Horror, where in addition to their original horror films, they introduced six more shorts that filled the Roxy with gasps, giggles, and groans. Summit also had the opportunity to collaborate with Montana's Statewide Independent Living Council and other three Centers for Independent Living to put on a statewide Independent Living Symposium, which provided a collective learning and networking opportunity as we laid the groundwork to strategize future advocacy efforts.

Over the summer Summit worked with the Missoula Iris Society, Mark O'Brien, and area HCBS providers to apply for three separate Brondum foundation grants and were successful in getting all three funded. The grant for the Iris society helped to fund the construction of an accessible pathway at the Iris garden at Fort Missoula, the grant written in partnership with Mark O'Brien help bring funds to Summit to fund orientation and mobility services for individuals who are low vision/blind, and the grant written with HCBS providers allowed 13 Missoula area providers to present 20% of their caregivers with a \$20 Downtown Missoula gift card for Caregiver Appreciation Day 2022.

September proved to be another busy month that started off with a celebratory 80's-themed party. Our friends at El Cazador and Baskin-Robbins provided both a delicious meal and a tantalizing dessert. There were lawn games and a costume contest with prizes provided for by Park Side Credit Union. All in all, we had a fantabulous time!

We partnered with the Rural Institute and the

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American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD) to bring in the All of Us Journey Bus and share their mission to recruit 1 million people into their research program, which takes DNA samples from 1 million individuals across America to improve precision medicine and help us to better individualize healthcare and healthcare needs.

Our crews in Hamilton and Ronan both held their annual community picnics during September. Both of these annual community picnics were long awaited after being put on hold due to COVID since 2019 and attendees had a fabulous time catching up and reuniting with one another in-person.

We hosted a Wine and Cheese night to bring more public awareness to the murals in the Allez! alleyway. During this event BASE performed music and comedy live, and Jenny Montgomery, Heidi J, Charlotte Macorn, Michael Beers, and Gavin Workman presented the steps it took to create their amazing art. 60 attendees sipped wine while witnessing all that makes BASE a wonderful program.

We began spooky season, AKA October, by reopening the main Summit office in Missoula to the community, and it's been so exciting to see the old and new faces around the office again!

Our very own Maddy Halland started their new group, BOLD, or By Our Love Decide, a group that focuses on the intersectionality between disability and LGBTQIA+. This was kicked off with a LGBTQIA+ Halloween Party, called Queers for Fears. The party was a success with lots of food, live D.J. Auntie E, and spooky scenes to take photos in.

Our office in Ronan wrapped up Project ALIVE, our project with APRIL, by hosting a focus group for community members with disabilities to talk about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and the barriers they faced when trying to access the COVID-19 vaccination or other services.

November saw another boost in donations to Summit through Giving Tuesday, the worldwide day of giving the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. Our end-of-year goal of \$3,000 raised is at this moment, nearly 2/3 the way there at just over \$1,900. We are so thankful for those who have donated, and are

excited to see our goal met before the New Year!

Mark Plonsky gave new filming ideas to BASE by hosting a stage combat class regularly for attendees to learn how to punch, kick, and throw hands in a safe but convincing way. This paired up with the introduction to Reggie Herbert's acting classes, we can safely say that BASE's films are destined to hit theaters soon!

And that brings us to December. What would December be without a staff holiday party to wrap up 2022 and to celebrate all that we have accomplished in 12 short months? We will finish 2022 with a break to visit friends, family, and neighbors for the holiday season, ring in the New Year, and rededicate ourselves in continuing to pursue our mission to advance the independence and civil rights of people with disabilities.

In addition to all of the great community activities and events we were able to accomplish this year, we are also proud of our most important task, assisting people living with disabilities to live independently, achieve their goals, and reach their own Summit! In our last reporting year, we were able to serve 616 consumers and conduct an additional 1552 information & referrals. We also continue to partner with schools throughout our service area to teach Building Advocacy and Learning Leadership Skills and Building Occupational Success Skills classes for students with disabilities, which we were able to provide 6 separate classes of that were attended by a total of 48 students.

It is amazing just how far we have come, and we definitely would not be where we are at without you. We are so blessed that you continue to support our efforts each and every year, and because of that support we get to do more and more each and every year to be of service and advance the disability community in Western Montana.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We hope that your holiday season was full of peace and rest, and that your New Year is marked with love and fresh hope for a bright future.

*Thank You!*



**SUMMIT STAFF****Missoula County****Executive Director**

Tami Hoar

**Program Coordinator**

Travis Hoffman

**SD-CFC/PAS Program Manager/HR**

Vacant

**SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator**

Patti Montgomery-Stewart

**SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator**

Carrie Dyrud

**SD-CFC/PAS Assistant/Insurance**

Jessica Workman

**Development/Outreach Director**

Madison Morgan

**Missoula County Coordinator**

Vacant

**Independent Living Specialist**

Tyler Stosich

**Independent Living Specialist**

Alyssa Coty

**IL & Recreation Specialist**

Brenden Dalin

**BASE Coordinator**

John Howard

**Youth Transitions Coordinator**

Gavin Workman

**Youth IL Specailist**

Billy Pierce

**BASE Advisor**

Michael Beers

**Administrative Assistant**

Laurie Swanson

**Financial Officer**

Scott Fels

**Accounting Assistant**

Kellie Morrison

**Flathead County****Coordinator**

Vacant

**Independent Living Specialist**

Dianna Kintzler

**Independent Living Specialist**

Vacant

**SD-CFC/PAS Specialist**

Aleyna Raymond

**Ravalli County****Coordinator**

Alan Fugleberg

**Independent Living Specialist**

Alice Mainwaring

**People First Advisor/IL Specialist**

Mary Millin

**Lake County****Independent Living Specialist**

Susan Morris

**Independent Living Specialist**

Mariah Armstrong

**New Summit Staff****Billy Pierce****Youth Independent Living Specialist**

I am so excited to be a part of the Summit IL team. I first heard about Summit while working as a care attendant, throughout my work I was able to see first-hand all of the positive things that came from the Summit community. After learning about Summit and participating in BASE activities, I knew I wanted to dedicate my time to Independent Living.

A few things about myself- I hail from the south and have been living in Missoula for the past 3 years working as a care attendant. I enjoy hiking, cooking, and lounging around with my 2 cats and dog. I also enjoy gardening, running around in the woods and tie dyeing.

**Brenden Dalin****Independent Living & Recreation Specialist**

After being a Peer Advocate at Summit for nine years, I am excited to be joining of the terrific Summit staff as the Independent Living Adaptive Recreation Specialist! This is a newly created position within Summit, and I look forward to working and collaborating with all organizations and agencies in Northwestern Montana, to elaborate on existing adaptive recreation programs, equipment, and access as well as creating new recreation opportunities for people living with a disability.

I graduated from the University of Montana with a Bachelor of Science degree in recreation resource management. I have also worked with the University of Montana Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities MonTECH where I assisted in the education and dissemination of their wildlife associated recreation program, equipment, and other wildlife associated opportunities for Montanans with disabilities. As a peer advocated at Summit, I was involved in many systems advocacy work and worked with individuals 1 on 1 who wanted to transition back into their community. More recently, I collaborated with multiple organizations, agencies, and business to construct a universally designed trail adjacent to Placid Lake State Park.

I am delighted to work once again at Summit, and looking forward to future ventures/adventures!

**SUMMIT BOARD**

Molly Blair  
Susanne Meikle  
Gabrielle Broere  
Peter Drakos

Michelle McLane  
Kelly Sellars  
Sherene Ricci  
Tom Seekins



# 2023 MONTANA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 2023 Montana Legislature convenes on January 2, 2023, which means that we need your help to ensure that programs and services that impact the lives of thousands of Montanans remain intact and receive adequately funded. As always, Summit will be working with Montana's other CIL's to track legislation pertaining to people with disabilities throughout the session and working to keep you informed of opportunities to lend your voice to the legislative process. If you would like to receive action notices and stay up to date on our legislative work, please visit the Montana Centers for Independent Living Action Alert website at [www.mtcil.org](http://www.mtcil.org) or Summit's webpage at [www.summitilc.org/actionalerts](http://www.summitilc.org/actionalerts) to sign up for action alert emails delivered to your inbox.



As we gear up for the 2023 Montana legislative session, there are many issues affecting people living with disabilities across Montana that will be addressed by the legislature that we will need to track and weigh in on. Montana's economy has been hit hard as we fumble our way out of the COVID-19 pandemic and one area in particular that needs severe attention are Home and Community-Based Services, particularly provider rates direct care workers/caregiver wages. Individuals with disabilities needing in-home personal care services have been facing a caregiver shortage for a number of years but that is currently in dire straits due to inadequate provider rates, which leads to insufficient wages for caregivers, who work day and night to help ensure people with disabilities can remain in their own homes.

## What is the action alert system?

The Montana Centers for Independent Living Action Alert system is an email listserv and online portal designed to inform you about current local, state, and national issues that affect the lives of people with disabilities.

## How does the action alert system work?

The action alert system works much like a listserv. Just sign up to become an advocate and we will email you about important opportunities to advocate on behalf of individuals with disabilities locally, statewide, and nationally.

You may also visit Summit's Action Alert webpage to learn more about our advocacy efforts as well as to take action on various issues right now.

## Why should you join?

Now more than ever we all need to join forces and work together to improve and preserve the services that keep people healthy, active, productive and involved in their communities. Remember, democracy is a "participatory sport." We all have tremendous power to bring about positive change, but only if we get involved, speak out and demand that our elected officials do the right thing.

Our Action Alert system offers many opportunities for you to get involved, follow our advocacy efforts, as well as to look up and contact your elected officials.

If you'd like to follow along with the legislation we track during the 2023 legislative session, simply visit Summit's action alert webpage or go to [www.mtcil.org](http://www.mtcil.org). You can also look up bills, watch hearings, and contact legislators on the Montana Legislature website at <https://leg.mt.gov/>.

**The 2023 Independent Living Legislative Day legislator luncheon will be held on Thursday, January 26, 2023.** IL Legislative Day is an opportunity for Independent Living advocates to meet with legislators over lunch in the Capitol rotunda to talk about the many issues facing people with disabilities and urge legislators to pass solutions to address those issues. To learn more, or if you are interested in attending, please contact Summit at 406-728-1630.

Joel Peden will be the full-time lobbyist for Summit during the 2023 legislative session. However, we will not be able to do all of this work alone. We need your help to ensure that disability programs & services are fully and adequately funded as well as to ensure that other legislation that would improve the lives of people with disabilities passes and legislation that would harm people with disabilities fails. ***We need your help to send emails and letters, make phone calls, and to show up in Helena and testify when the time comes.*** Legislation that passes or fails in Helena has a great, direct impact on our lives and ***it is important that people with disabilities and our allies show up in great numbers to make sure that our voices are heard.***

## Kalispell YODA

With changes in health guidelines and the ability to once again meet in-person, the Kalispell youth group YODA (Youth Opening Doors through Advocacy) has seen quite the turnaround.

These past few months we have thrown two parties, plenty of games, team building exercises and arrival of new team members.

We have plans for new lessons on advocacy to remind us just how far the disability movement has come and how far we still have to go. YODA is about forming connections and instilling knowledge in our members so that they can feel confident holding, not only their own futures in their hands, but also give them the tools they need to spur further change.

Kalispell YODA meets regularly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of every month from 4-6 p.m. at the Gateway Community Mall in Kalispell. A group text will be sent out to members in advance with information on our next meeting and with specified instructions. Our next meeting dates will be the 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of January.

**If you have any questions or if you would like to sign up please contact Dianna at:**

**email: [dkintzler@summitilc.org](mailto:dkintzler@summitilc.org)**

**phone: 406-257-0048**

## Ronan Workshops and Classes

Our Ronan office is ringing in the New Year with Kootenai and Bitterroot Salish language classes. These classes provide an opportunity to let culture in and to learn about the people and their decedents who have resided in the Mission Valley and surrounding area for over a millennium.

**akuqyuti'it - "Summit," translated into English meaning highest point on a mountain top.**

The Native American Task Force has been reestablished and is being chaired by our Ronan Peer Advocates Allyshia Manuel and Tammie Miller.

Meetings will be held two times a month. For more information about the language classes or workshops/classes in the Ronan area please call Mariah at 406-215-1604 ext. 133

# BASE Film Extravaganza

**January 19, 6:00 PM**

**at**

**The Roxy Theater**

**718 S Higgins Ave, Missoula, MT 59801**

**Free!!!**

**Free!!!**

**Come check out a bunch new horror movies produced, written, filmed, directed, and edited by BASE participants and members of the Community!**

**For more information please contact John at (406) 215-1080**

# BASE EVENTS

725 West Alder, #4 Missoula, MT

BASE stands for home base, like in hide and go seek. In life, you have to establish a BASE first, that's where we come in.

## All Abilities Yoga on Zoom

Wednesdays 4pm to 5pm

## BASE Game Night

(call to verify dates and times)

## Art Group

Fridays 1pm-3pm

## Acting Workshop

Select Fridays 4pm-5pm (Call for Details)

## BOLD Group

(Call for Details)

For BASE schedule updates and additional events go to

[www.summitilc.org/calendar](http://www.summitilc.org/calendar)

or check the BASE Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/base725>

To get involved or to share ideas of new BASE programs, contact BASE [jhoward@summitilc.org](mailto:jhoward@summitilc.org).

To donate to BASE go to:

[www.basemissoula.org](http://www.basemissoula.org)

phone: 406-215-1080

## CLASSIFIED ADS

### Shoprider power chair

300lb capacity. Needs battery & charger. Free (406) 728-1630

### Symmetry Stander, Quickie Powerchair, Invacare Powerbed, Hoyer lift

Comfortable, easy-to-use seat stander Call/leave message: Tejeanne (406) 865-0221

### Power Scooter

\$500 obo. Please contact Adrian: (406) 263-8650

### Adult Tricycle

Schwinn 26" tricycle, bike pump included. \$500obo (406) 721-1698

### Wheelchair Lift

Ricon wheelchair lift model #S1231 G00100100. \$400obo. Contact: Cory (406) 471-3314

### Silver Spring wheelchair ramp 10' L x 36" W

Made of high-strength light weight aluminum. \$297obo. Contact: [tamera144@gmail.com](mailto:tamera144@gmail.com) or 406-363-4898

### Smart Talker text scanner

Slightly used, \$700. Contact Larry at 406-633-4036 or [ketch1969@gmail.com](mailto:ketch1969@gmail.com)

**Nova Walker, Quontum 600 power wheelchair, Commode, 2 Transfer Benches, Beezy Manual Wheelchair.** Call Gary (406) 224-5527 or [garylee032051@gmail.com](mailto:garylee032051@gmail.com)

**Garaventa Super-Trac Portable Wheelchair Lift for stairs.** Purchased new for \$12,000 and used only a few times. Will sell for \$2,500 OBO. Contact Jacob Francom, Troy Public Schools, [jfrancom@troyk12.org](mailto:jfrancom@troyk12.org), (406) 295-4520.

### Acorn Stair lift

For going up to 6 stairs while seated. \$300 OBO. Call John at 546-7003.

To get listed contact Tyler Stosich at (406) 728-1630 or email [tstosich@summitilc.org](mailto:tstosich@summitilc.org).

Or, list and find items on the MonTECH exchange:

<http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/mtddb/>

Summit is funded in part under an agreement with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Any statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department.

## 2023 SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES

### Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA):

Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) from the third quarter of 2021 through the third quarter of 2022, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries will receive an 8.7 percent COLA for 2023.

### Social Security Disability Thresholds

#### Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA):

	2022	2023
Non-Blind	\$1,350/mo.	\$1,470/mo.
Blind	\$2,260/mo.	\$2,460/mo.

#### Trial Work Period (TWP)

\$ 970/mo.	\$ 1050/mo.
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#### SSI Federal Payment Standard:

Individual	\$ 841/mo.	\$ 914/mo.
Couple	\$1,261/mo.	\$1,371/mo.

#### SSI Resource Limits:

Individual	\$2,000	\$2,000
Couple	\$3,000	\$3,000



## BECOME AN ADVOCATE



Scan to sign up for email alerts, view posted alerts, or even see what legislation we are tracking.



The Montana Centers for Independent Living Action Alert system is an email listserv and online portal designed to inform you about current local, state, and national issues that affect the lives of people with disabilities.

This publication is available in alternative format on request. Please call 1 (800) 398-9002.

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