



Building Awareness & Advocating Change for People with Disabilities

Advancing Access & Equity

**National Disability
Employment
Awareness Month**



In October, Americans pay tribute to the accomplishments of the men and women with disabilities whose work helps keep the nation's economy strong and by reaffirming their commitment to ensure equal opportunity for all citizens.

This effort to educate the public about the issues related to disability and employment began in 1945, when Congress enacted Public Law 176, declaring the first week of October each year as National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week. In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. Some 25 years later, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

NDEAM offers us an opportunity to celebrate the many contributions of people with disabilities to America's workplaces and economy. Led by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), NDEAM also

In This Issue...

Upcoming Workshops.....	2
BASE Garden.....	3
County Updates.....	4
New Staff.....	5
Guest Column.....	6
BASE Events.....	7
Living Well Class.....	8

showcases supportive and inclusive policies and practices benefiting workers and employers.

This year's NDEAM theme, "Advancing Access and Equity: Then, Now, and Next," was chosen to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the first federal legislation to prohibit discrimination and address access and equity for people with disabilities.

"National Disability Employment Awareness Month reminds us of the valued contributions people with disabilities make in our nation's workplaces, and the 50th anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 marks a major milestone in our nation's ongoing quest to advance access and equity for all Americans," said Assistant Secretary for Disability Employment Policy Taryn M. Williams.

In August 2021, the employment-population ratio* for disabled people hit 19.2%, surpassing its pre-pandemic level of 19.1% in February 2020. In August 2023, it was 23.0%—the highest on record. This is likely in part due to pandemic-prompted changes such as greater access to telework and other workplace flexibilities, which may be opening new doors for many disabled workers. But, despite this positive trend, an unacceptable employment gap remains, and until it closes, we have work to do.

#NDEAM

Tell Congress: Support the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act NOW!

Montana Centers for Independent Living



The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides critical support for millions of people with disabilities to help afford the basics of everyday life, like food and rent.

But SSI has many rules that make it hard for people to save money and get out of poverty. SSI has an asset limit that has not been updated since 1989! Assets include cash, money in bank accounts, most retirement accounts, and other financial resources. Right now, people who get SSI can only have \$2,000 in assets. Married couples can only have \$3,000.

On Tuesday, September 12, the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act (S.2767/ H.R. 5408) was introduced by Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Representatives Brian Higgins (D-NY) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA). This bill makes long-overdue reforms to the SSI program that would empower millions of people with disabilities to earn and save more money for their futures.

Urge your members of Congress to support people with disabilities by co-sponsoring the bipartisan SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act.

<https://www.votervoice.net/SUMMIT/Campaigns/106910/Respond>

UPCOMING FALL WORKSHOPS

Money Management: Summit is starting a class October 4th called Money Management. In this class you will learn about ways to manage your money. You will be creating a budget with expenses and also establish money goals in which you want to achieve. You will talk about tactics to help manage your money to ensure not only bills are paid but that you also can use extra money to put towards saving for things in which you have a goal for. You will learn about tools for tracking your money, whether it's digital budgeting apps or paper budgeting. The four-week class starts October 4 and is every Wednesday from 3 PM to 4:30 PM with a short break in the middle.

LWC (Living Well in the Community): This 11 session workshop may help you choose and work on a personal goal, experience peer support, create more possibilities in your life, and make improvements to your health and wellness. The workshop starts on November 1 and will be every Wednesday from 3 PM to 5 PM.

CHEW (Cost-Effective Healthy Eating Workshop): Join Summit for a hands-on cooking workshop where you will cook along with your fellow group members, learn healthy and affordable eating options, and discuss what cooking healthy meals means to you.

For more information or to sign up for a workshop please contact Alyssa A.S.A.P at 406-728-1630 ext 116, or at acoty@summitilc.org.

Congradulations – Alyssa!



On June 10th, 2023 our Missoula County Coordinator, Alyssa, welcomed two babies into the Summit family.

When first coming into the world they had to spend a couple of months in the NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) where the nurses loved them and they exceeded all expectations faster than anyone expected. They actually learned to eat faster than any baby the NICU has ever seen. While in the NICU they had to overcome many trials including getting off oxygen, learning how to eat, learning how to regulate their own body temperature, and more.

They overcame the many difficulties that accompany an early entry into the world and got to finally come home to their mother, father, and the Summit Family on August 13th, 2023. On occasion you will find them visiting the site office.

Asher is a spunky little boy that loves food and loves to look at lights. He loves holding up his head and is already trying to learn how to crawl his way out the door.

Azriel is a calm and collected little boy that loves to sleep and loves to stare at his brother. He loves snuggles with mom and is very curious about life as you will see his curiosity through the look on his face.



BASE Garden



THIS SPRING AND SUMMER **BASE** GREW VEGETABLES TO SNACK ON WHILE SLAYING DRAGONS AT GAME NIGHT, OR WHILE WORKING ON FILM SETS, AND HANGOUT DURING **YODA**.

FULL OF HOPE AND OPTIMISM WE PUTIFULLY PLANTED OUR SEEDS IN THE GROUND THIS SPRING; EXCITED TO SEE IF ANY FRUIT WOULD GROW OUT OF THESE TINY LITTLE SEEDS.

DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE HAVE LIMITED EXPERIENCE AS FARMERS OF FOOD, OUR LITTLE GARDEN PREVAILED DUE TO OUR PEDICATION TO WATERING AND PROVIDING LOTS OF LOVE.

WE REAPED THE HARVEST AND ENJOYED MANY MEALS OF, RADISHES, LETTUCE, TOMATOES, CORN, SQUASH, AND CUCUMBERS. WE ALSO GREW MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF HERBS AND SPICES THAT WE CAN USE TO SEASON OUR DISHES. WE ARE EXCITED TO CONTINUE GROWING FOOD AND SHARING THE HARVEST WITH OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

Hamilton Office Update

Summit's office in Hamilton that serves Ravalli County continues to be very busy. We are experiencing increased participation in activities held weekly or bi-weekly. Current classes and workshops include:

- Rainbow River (LGBTQ+ group) continues to meet on Mondays
- Hero Squad meets every other Tuesday
- Art Expressions meets on Tuesday afternoons
- People First meets on Wednesday afternoons
- Thank Goodness It's Art Friday meets on Friday mornings.

The Hamilton office welcomed a new peer advocate, Robin Palin, last summer. Hamilton office staff participated in the O'Hara Commons and Sustainability Center's Farmer's Market across the summer.

For more information about our classes and workshops please call 406-363-5242.

Ronan Office Update

Summit's office in Ronan that serves Lake and Sanders counties is currently open Monday through Thursday with public office hours from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The office is expected to return to Monday-Friday hours sometime in October.

The Arts and Crafts class is now offered on Thursdays from 1:00 -3:00 p.m. and is co-coordinated by Ronan peer advocates Tammie Miller and Beth Ford. The Arts and Crafts class is working on a variety of different projects including painting, beading, among other things. This class is open to all, and we have enjoyed the participation by visitors from out-of-state this summer.



Alan Fugleberg, County Coordinator, recently completed facilitator training for the Living Well in the Community class developed by the UM Rural Institute.

If you have any questions about our classes and workshops, please call 406-215-1604.



SUMMIT BOARD

Molly Blair
Susanne Meikle
Gabrielle Broere
Peter Drakos

Michelle McLane
Kelly Sellars
Sherene Ricci
Tom Seekins

SUMMIT STAFF

Missoula County

Executive Director

Tami Hoar

Program Coordinator

Travis Hoffman

SD-CFC/PAS Program Manager

Carrie Dyrud

SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator

Patti Montgomery-Stewart

SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator

Devon Harris

SD-CFC/PAS Administrative Assistant

Jessica Workman

Missoula County Coordinator

Alyssa Coty

IL Specialist & Peer Coordinator

Tyler Stosich

Program Support Specialist

Theresa Martinosky

IL & Recreation Specialist

Brenden Dalin

BASE Coordinator

John Howard

Youth Transitions Coordinator

Gavin Workman

Youth IL Specailist

Vacant

BASE Advisor

Michael Beers

Administrative Assistant

Laurie Swanson

Financial Officer

Scott Fels

Accounting Assistant

Kellie Morrison

Flathead County

County Coordinator

Dianna Kintzler

Independent Living Specialist

Vacant

SD-CFC/PAS Specialist

Aleyna Raymond

Ravalli County

County Coordinator

Alan Fugleberg

Independent Living Specialist

Alice Mainwaring

Peer Support Specialist

Mary Millin

Lake County

County Coordinator

Alan Fugleberg

Independent Living Specialist

Susan Morris

Independent Living Specialist

Carol Madden

New Summit Staff

Carol Madden

Independent Living Specialist - Ronan



Carol Madden is a 13 year resident of Ronan. She grew up and graduated from high school in Thompson Falls and later earned a bachelor's degree in education along with a special education endorsement from Montana State University-Billings.

Carol has 20 years of experience as a classroom teacher and special education teacher in Montana, Florida, and Washington. She is currently a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for the 20th judicial district encompassing Lake and Sanders Counties. She also has experience working at Youth

Correction, a service providing parenting classes and supervised visitation for families in crisis.

Some of Carol's interests include gardening, sewing, learning new things, horses, and other animals. She deeply loves her home and her family.

Carol is very excited about working for Summit and helping rebuild the services offered in Lake and Sanders counties. She is especially excited about working with you in her community who are prepared to transition into adulthood.

We're Hiring!



INDEPENDENT LIVING SPECIALIST
- KALISPELL OFFICE



YOUTH INDEPENDENT LIVING SPECIALIST
- MISSOULA OFFICE



VACCINATION PROJECT COORDINATOR
- MISSOULA OFFICE

Send your resume, cover letter, and Summit employment application to
thoar@summitilc.org



Application materials available for download on Summit's website at
www.summitilc.org/about/employment

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE NEXT DISASTER? (PART 1)

Severe snowstorms, record heat, power outages, floods, wildfires, and large-scale communication failures can happen unexpectedly and without warning. People may have to evacuate quickly or be stuck in their homes unexpectedly for days. This makes planning and preparation essential. Being prepared for emergencies can help quell feelings of fear, anxiety, and reduce the amount of possible property damage. While disasters and emergencies affect everyone, they disproportionately affect people with disabilities and those with access and functional needs (AFNs).

Disabilities/AFNs can impact Montanan's and their families in many different ways, which is why it's important to consider your individual circumstance and specific needs to effectively prepare for emergencies. "Survival outcomes are strongly related to personal preparation, and negative impacts are generally harsher on people who leave planning to others, such as local government officials." – Missoula Emergency Manager. The best guarantee of survival for all Montanans is to plan ahead and create an individual and/or family emergency plan.

When planning ahead for disasters and emergencies, it's important for you and your family to:

1. Stay informed by signing up to receive local emergency alerts
2. Create an individual and/or family emergency plan
3. Build an emergency medical information kit that can be given to first responders and hospital staff

More to come, be prepared for the next disaster. The Summit Independent Living Newsletter will be running a series of articles that will sequentially provide in depth information on each of the emergency planning steps listed above.

(Lily Hartman)

For more information on how to plan ahead for disasters visit:

<https://www.ready.gov/plan>

Next Article:

How do I stay informed about local disasters and emergencies?

BASE SCHEDULE

725 West Alder, #4

Missoula, MT

- **All Abilities Yoga on Zoom**
Wednesdays 4pm-5pm
- **Game Night**
Every Thursday (**Call for Details**)
- **Art Group**
Fridays 1pm-3pm
- **Healthy Relationship Class**
(**Call for Details**)
- **Improv Workshop**
Every Thursday (**Call for Details**)
- **BOLD Game Night**
2nd Wednesday monthly 5:00-7:00pm

Workshops Coming Soon:

- BASE Movie Night
- Stage Combat
- Film Workshops

For BASE Schedule Updates and Additional Events go to:

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.

Contact BASE:

www.basemissoula.org

Phone: 406-215-1080

CLASSIFIED ADS

Jazzy Pride Wheelchair

\$1000 obo, only 2yrs old
call: Linda 406-531-4938

2014 Dodge VMI Conversion Van

Grand Caravan, 59,000 miles
\$30,000 obo, call: 406-543-2345

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 or 406-363-4898

Smart Talker text scanner

Slightly used, \$700. Contact Larry at 406-633-4036 or 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

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

Or, list and find items on the MonTECH exchange: <http://montech.ruralinstitute.umd.edu/mtadb/>

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.

LIVING WELL IN THE COMMUNITY

**FIRST CLASS IS NOVEMBER 1st, 3PM-5PM,
AND GOES FOR 11 TOTAL WEEKS**



WHO SHOULD TAKE THIS CLASS?

THIS WORKSHOP IS FOR ALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AS IT IS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO SUPPORT THE CHOICES AND DECISIONS MADE BY EACH ATTENDEE THAT ALLOWS THEM TO LIVE THE LIFE THEY WANT TO LIVE



WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE THIS CLASS?

THIS CLASS WILL ALLOW YOU TO:

- CHOOSE AND WORK ON A MEANINGFUL GOAL
- EXPERIENCE AND GIVE PEER SUPPORT
- MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO YOUR HEALTH & WELLNESS
- CREATE MORE POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUR LIFE



THIS WORKSHOP INCLUDES 10 SESSIONS ON:

- GOAL SETTING
- BUILDING SUPPORT
- HEALTHY REACTIONS
- STAYING ON COURSE
- HEALTHY COMMUNICATION
- SEEKING INFORMATION
- EATING WELL
- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- ADVOCACY
- MAINTENANCE



WHAT TOOLS WILL YOU SEE USED IN EACH CLASS?

- FACILITATED DISCUSSION
- INFORMATIVE VIDEOS
- USEFUL INFORMATION
- INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

CONTACT ALYSSA AT 406-728-1630 EXT. 116, ACOTY@SUMMITILC.ORG



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

Sign up to receive our newsletter in your email inbox at www.summitilc.org