



Celebrating 36 Years of the Americans with Disabilities Act

This year marks the 36th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a landmark civil rights law that continues to shape a more inclusive and accessible nation. Signed into law on July 26, 1990, by George H. W. Bush, the ADA affirmed a simple but powerful principle: people with disabilities deserve the same opportunities, rights, and access as everyone else. Its passage was the result of years of advocacy, organizing, and determination by disability rights leaders and allies who demanded that equality be more than an ideal—it had to be a reality.

The ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public services, public accommodations, transportation, telecommunications, and many other areas of everyday life. Its passage represented a historic step forward, breaking down barriers that had long prevented millions of Americans from fully participating in their communities. By establishing clear protections, the law helped ensure that disability would no longer be a reason to exclude someone from work, school, public life, or essential services.

Over the past 36 years, the ADA has transformed the way our nation thinks about accessibility. Curb ramps, accessible parking spaces, elevators, captioned media, accessible websites, service animal accommodations, and workplace modifications have become familiar features of everyday life. While many of these improvements benefit people with disabilities, they also make communities more convenient and welcoming for parents with strollers, older adults, veterans, travelers, and others. In this way, accessibility has proven to be not only a civil rights issue, but also a practical investment in stronger, more usable public spaces.

The ADA is about much more than physical access. It recognizes the value, dignity, and contributions of every individual. By promoting equal opportunity, it empowers people with disabilities to pursue education,

careers, recreation, and independent living without unnecessary barriers. Employers, businesses, schools, and government agencies continue to work

toward creating environments where everyone has the opportunity to succeed. The law has also helped shift public attitudes, encouraging communities to see disability through the lens of inclusion, participation, and respect rather than limitation.

Although significant progress has been made, the work is not finished. Advances in technology, digital accessibility, transportation, and inclusive design present new opportunities—and new responsibilities—to ensure that accessibility keeps pace with the changing world. Websites, mobile apps, online forms, virtual meetings, and digital services must all be designed with accessibility in mind so that people with disabilities can fully participate in modern life. The ADA reminds us that inclusion is an ongoing commitment, not a one-time achievement, and that progress depends on continued awareness, accountability, and action.

As we celebrate the 36th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, we also celebrate the resilience, leadership, and advocacy of the disability community. Their efforts helped make the ADA a reality and continue to inspire improvements that benefit all Americans.

This anniversary is also a time to recognize the many individuals, families, employers, educators, and advocates who work every day to advance accessibility and inclusion in their communities.

This anniversary is an opportunity for each of us to reflect on the importance of accessibility, equality, and respect. By working together to remove barriers and embrace inclusion, we honor the spirit of the ADA and help build stronger communities where everyone has the opportunity to participate, contribute, and thrive.



ADA36
Americans with Disabilities Act
1990-2026

Be Prepared for Wildfire Season

Wildfire is a part of life in Montana, and being prepared before fire season begins can make all the difference. Protecting your home, creating an evacuation plan, and staying informed helps keep your family, neighbors, and first responders safe.

Protect Your Home

Most homes lost during a wildfire ignite from wind-driven embers, not direct flames. Reduce your home's risk by creating a defensible space:

- Remove combustible materials within the first five feet of your home, including wood mulch, and replace them with rock.
- Avoid planting juniper and other conifers next to structures.
- Screen exterior vents with 1/8-inch metal mesh.
- Clean roofs and gutters of pine needles and debris.
- Remove combustible items, such as patio cushions, during an evacuation.
- Keep decks and fences well maintained and free of flammable materials.

Wildfire preparedness is a community effort. Work with neighbors to reduce wildfire hazards, and consider requesting a free home wildfire risk assessment.

Prepare to Evacuate

Wildfires can spread quickly, leaving little time to act. Every household member should have a 72-hour "go-bag" prepared before fire season. Remember the Six P's:

- People and Pets
- Papers and important documents
- Prescriptions and medical needs
- Pictures and irreplaceable keepsakes
- Personal computers and hard drives
- Plastic (credit cards) and cash

Create a household emergency plan that includes evacuation routes, meeting locations, communication plans, responsibilities for each family member, and arrangements for pets and livestock.

Stay Informed

Register for Smart911 to receive emergency alerts by phone, text, or email. Missoula County uses two evacuation levels:

- Evacuation Warning: Be ready to leave immediately. Complete final preparations and monitor conditions closely.
- Evacuation Order: Leave immediately. Do not wait if you feel unsafe—evacuating early reduces risk and traffic congestion.

Follow instructions from emergency responders and always use designated evacuation routes.

After a Fire

Do not return home until officials have lifted the evacuation order. Even after the fire has passed, hazards such as downed power lines, damaged structures, and gas leaks may remain. Carefully inspect your property and follow guidance from local emergency officials before re-entering.

Be Ready Before You Need To

Preparing today gives you more time, more options, and greater peace of mind when wildfire threatens. A fire-ready home, an evacuation plan, and timely emergency alerts can help protect your family and strengthen your entire community.

For more information, [wildfire preparedness resources](#), or to [request a free home wildfire risk assessment](#), contact Missoula County emergency management or your local wildfire mitigation program.

Celebrate 36 years of the ADA

at Out to Lunch, downtown Missoula

July 29th, 2026, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Caras Park

Join Summit Independent Living
at Caras Park In Missoula to
celebrate the 36th anniversary of
the signing of the Americans with
Disabilities Act.



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Independent Living Specialist

Susan Morris

Independent Living Specialist

Erin Eckenrode

Independent Living Specialist

Teresa Nightingale

New Summit Staff

Shannon Dinsdale

Independent Living Specialist - Missoula

Shannon is originally from the Helena/Boulder area and is currently living in Missoula, pursuing her Master of Social Work at the University of Montana. She enjoys traveling, attending live music events, painting, music events, and spending time outside.

Shannon has a background in case management, housing services, medical insurance, home health, community nutrition, and program coordination. She is excited to join the Summit Team because she believes everyone deserves the opportunity to live independently with dignity and choice and hopes to help make a positive impact for those with disabilities throughout the community.

Hillary Ottolini

Independent Living Specialist - Kalispell



Hillary was born and raised in Northwest Montana. She later received her bachelor's degree in graphic design and graduated with high honors. She is currently continuing her education in the hopes of receiving her master's degree in social work.

In her free time she loves to draw, hike, and hang out with friends and family. She is excited to work for Summit in Kalispell and hopes to help others through passion and empathy.

Erin Eckenrode

Independent Living Specialist - Polson



Erin comes to Summit with experience in many facets of social services. Erin has worked with several organizations throughout the country serving individuals of all cultures where she provided advocacy, resources and supports in various capacities. With her formal education being in criminology and forensic science, Erin's passion is in motivating and assisting others to live their best lives. Erin enjoys spending time with her family, health/wellness coaching, cooking, and being outdoors with her doggy Palo. Erin is looking forward to continuing her passion in advocacy work.

Summit Office Updates

Kalispell Office

Please Join us for our ADA celebration on July 16th from 1:00pm to 4:00pm at the Kalispell Summit office to help us celebrate 36 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act! There will be food, drinks, crafts and a special appearance by Kalispell Mayor Ryan Hunter.

Kalispell's YODA group meets on the first Tuesday of each month at the office in Kalispell from 4:00p.m.-5:30 p.m. In September we will return to our regular schedule of meeting the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. We promote team building with group activities that focus on collaboration, advocacy, and, of course, fun! If you are a young person with a disability who is 14-30ish, we encourage you to join.

Third Thursday Crafternoon, arts and crafts group, continues to meet each month on the third Thursday from 2:00p.m.-4:00p.m. Participants can try a provided project or work on something of their own. Abilities of all kinds are welcome to join the fun!

Also, please help us welcome our new Independent Living Specialist, Hillary Ottolini.

For more information about workshops, peer group, or employment please contact Dianna at 406-257-0048 ext. 3 or go to www.summitilc.org/about/employment.

Polson Office

Summit's branch office in Polson is now open 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Polson will be hosting an ADA celebration on Wednesday, July 15th, from noon to 3:00 p.m. There will be information about the Americans with Disabilities Act, snacks, and crafts.

Teresa "Tess" nightingale continues to lead the Youth Opening Doors to Advocacy on the third Thursday of each month, Arts and Crafts to meet on Wednesdays, and Mail & Munchies on the fourth Thursday of each month. Summit staff will also assist people with letters from Social Security or Medicaid, etc. on a walk-in basis.

IL Specialist Susan Morris continues to work remotely with consumers seeking to apply for Social Security disability benefits and helps with the first-level appeals process. Alan Fugleberg, Deputy Director for Summit, continues to work from the offices in Lake and Ravalli counties, and is working a day per week in Missoula assisting with Social Security disability applications and other independent living work.

For more information about workshops, peer group, or employment please contact The Polson team at 406-215-1604 or go to www.summitilc.org/about/employment.

Hamilton Office

Please join us for the Hamilton Summit ADA Celebration on Friday, July 17th, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. There will be information about the Americans with Disabilities Act, snacks, and crafts.

We have several classes and workshops continuing through the summer. They include: CHEW cooking class, two Dungeons & Dragons groups, TGIAF, and mail & munchies. We also host a Blind & Low Vision support group.

The Ravalli County office in Hamilton continues to be busy assisting consumers with disability applications, appeals, overpayments, and continuing disability reviews.

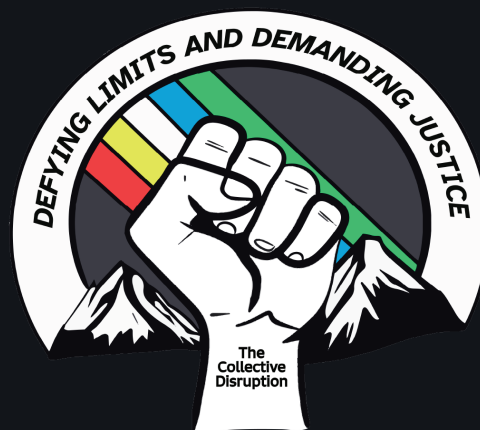
If you have any questions about our classes and workshops, please call Darcy Curry at 406-363-5242.

Crip Camp

A Disability Revolution



a
NETFLIX ORIGINAL
Documentary



TOUR 2026

THE COLLECTIVE DISRUPTION

Special Thanks to:
The Roxy Theater



Get Your Tickets



Crip Camp/Montana Summer Tour 2026

Join the Collective Disruption for a **free** special screening of Crip Camp! The Disability Rights Movement isn't just history, it's our future! Be part of the conversation and join the disability revolution this summer!

Get Tickets at: <https://www.theroxytheater.org/show/crip-camp-mt-summer-tour-2026/>

**July 27th - 7pm to 10pm at the Roxy Theatre
(718 South Higgins Avenue)**

BASE SCHEDULE

3104 W Broadway

Missoula, MT

For the following activities,
please call BASE for details:

- All Abilities Yoga
- Game Night
- Art Group
- Filmmaking
- Improv Workshop

Check out BASE films on the BASE YouTube
channel BASE Film Extravaganza.
(see QR code below)



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

Walker with Seat

Blue with removable backrest and storage.
\$75 obo, in good condition
call: 406-241-3886

Quantum Q6 Edge Wheelchair

Barely used, needs battery.
Call for a price: 406-282-1263

Standing commode

\$300 obo, in good condition
call: Nancy 406-273-9012

Adult Symmetry Stander

\$300 obo, in good condition
call: Nancy 406-273-9012

Jazzy Pride Wheelchair

Make offer, only 2yrs old
call: Linda 406-531-4938

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

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/>

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Any statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department.

BE ELECTION READY

The next general election may still be months away, but now is the perfect time for Montanans to make sure they are ready to vote. Taking a few simple steps today can help ensure a smooth voting experience when Election Day arrives.

Start by checking your voter registration. If you have moved, changed your name, or are unsure of your registration status, verify your information through the Montana Secretary of State's My Voter Page at <https://votemt.gov/>. Montana also offers same-day voter registration at county election offices, but confirming your information ahead of time can save time and reduce stress.

Take time to learn about the issues and candidates. Voters can find nonpartisan information through resources such as the [Montana Secretary of State's website](#), the [2026 Montana Ballot Issues webpage](#), [Vote411.org](#), Ballotpedia, local news outlets, and candidate websites. Reviewing information before ballots are mailed or polling places open can help you make informed decisions

on candidates, local initiatives, and statewide measures.

Know your voting options. Most Montana voters receive ballots by mail, but in-person voting opportunities are also available. Check with your county election office to confirm important dates, ballot mailing schedules, polling locations, and any identification requirements. If you plan to vote by mail, make sure your mailing address is current and understand the deadlines for returning your ballot.

Participating in elections is one of the most important ways to make your voice heard. By verifying your registration, researching the issues, and making a plan to vote, you'll be ready when the next general election arrives on November 3, 2026. **Every vote counts, and preparation starts now.**



BECOME AN ADVOCATE



Scan to sign up for email alerts, view posted alerts, or even see who your candidates are.



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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