

Celebrating All Abilities Virginia



FALL 2019

Here I Go Again.....

A year ago, I finished the paperwork to shut down Celebrating Special Children, including the website. After 17 years of being in business, including 15 years as a non-profit, it was very disheartening. But things happen for a reason, right?

I've spent the past year working here in Virginia Beach at my regular job as a substitute teacher. I've gotten involved in local politics; mostly as a canvassing driver, envelope stuffer and poll worker. I'm particularly interested in voter registration and voter suppression issues. Additionally, I joined the Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities and am very much enjoying that diverse group.

I also spent a lot of time thinking about ways to give new life to the work of Celebrating Special Children. First on the list was to find a new name.... hence *Celebrating All Abilities* became the new name on the Facebook page and I designed a new logo image. The next step was to create a new website with the new name. So I bought the domain address and taught myself--with invaluable help from my son, Conor-- to use Wordpress to populate the site with the information I had saved from the previous site. I think the site is user-friendly and easy to navigate, but I'm still working on ways to make it more visually interesting. The Wordpress staff has been keeping in touch with me to make sure I have everything I need.

So what stays the same as before? I'll still be posting and reposting to the facebook page and website; I'll continue to put out a newsletter roughly every quarter and send a notification to the listserve. I will still update the list of resources each year. If you would like to be added to the email list, you can message me through the Facebook page, or contact me at celebratingabilities@gmail.com.

And what will be different? Most importantly, I'm not looking to make this site into an income-producing business. That is to say, I will not be asking for money-- in the form of advertising, sponsorships, donations, or anything else.

Celebrating All Abilities will be just me, my computer and our community of folks who care for and about people of all abilities. See you in December!

Laura Nelson, Editor



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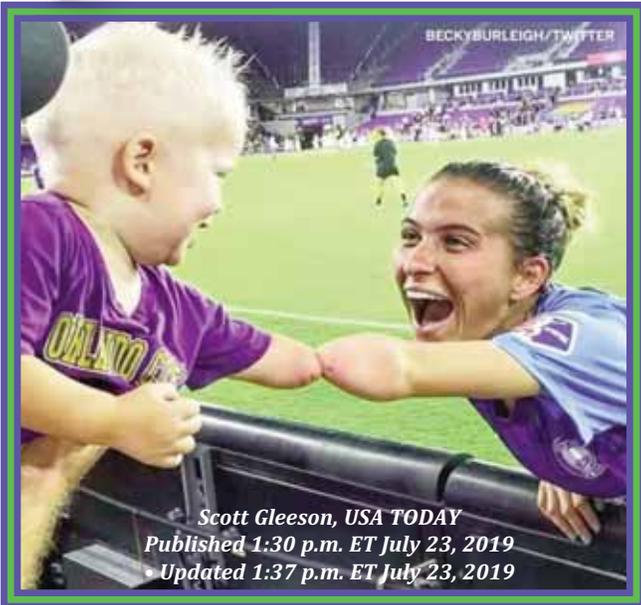
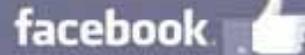
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FALL 2019

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~ FOUND ON FACEBOOK ~



Scott Gleason, USA TODAY
Published 1:30 p.m. ET July 23, 2019
Updated 1:37 p.m. ET July 23, 2019

Orlando Pride soccer player Carson Pickett said growing up she didn't have anyone who looked like her to look up to and she'd often feel stared at in public settings.

When she met 2-year-old Joseph Tidd, she became the role model she always wished she had. Both Pickett and Todd were born without a left forearm and have shared a special relationship as a result.

"Literally within five minutes of me meeting him, we had an instant bond," Pickett told USA TODAY Sports on Tuesday. "It's interesting, though, because for a kid that young, I didn't expect him to connect the way he did. Even though we both have the same arm (birth defect), it was amazing to me that it felt like he realized why we were bonded."

Pickett met the toddler for the first time in April for a game and the Pride shared video footage in which Pickett bent down to show her arm to Tidd, who lit up with an instant smile as the two had an emotional exchange and Pickett began tickling Tidd as well as fistbumping and high-fiving. ■

Disability Community of Hampton Roads - Virginia
Shared by: www.facebook.com/HamptonRoadsSpecialNeeds/
July 30, 2019

A Special Needs Parent Fell In A Hole

Family member: What hole?



Boss: Oh that's a shame. You can take the day off.

Doctor: Can you keep a diary of your experiences in the hole?

DBHDD: We will assess the size of the hole. However, it may take up to 18 months.

Local authority: Sorry we don't have enough money for a ladder.

Charity: Here's a form. Fill it in to apply to get on the waiting list for a ladder.

Another special needs parent:
I'm here! I'm coming down there with you. I've been here before. I know how to get out and I won't let you do it alone.



What's wrong with this picture?



Because of this I started Ability Access, this blog is just the start of the journey Ability Access is going on, to raise awareness of disability access and raising issues around disability that need to be discussed both locally and nationally.

Simon Sansome, Founder and Editor
<https://abilityaccess.blog/about/>



Look for the next issue of Celebrating All Abilities to be posted during the month of December, 2019. Send story ideas, interesting links, and events to

Laura Nelson, Editor at CelebratingAllAbilities@gmail.com

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK



Puzzled by your child's academics
in school?

Hear from the experts who know it best!

Understanding Special Education Workshop

Wednesday, September 18, 2019 ✦ 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Denbigh Community Center
15198 Warwick Blvd. ✦ Newport News, VA

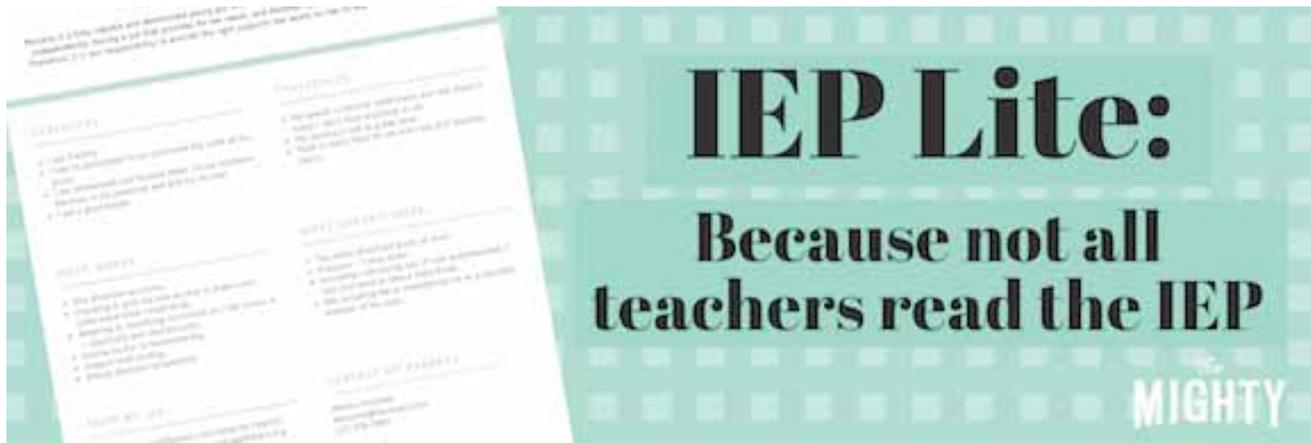


- Understand the steps in receiving FAPE
- Explain the Special Education process
- Define the IEP document
- Discuss the parent's role in the IEP meeting

To register please call or email:

Shelly Hosler ✦ 757-887-4606 ✦ shelly.hosler.ctr@navy.mil





If Your Child Has an IEP, Make Sure You Give Their Teachers This

Reprinted with thanks from **The Mighty**.
<https://themighty.com>

by Ellen Stumbo, Parenting Editor at The Mighty. She is also the founder of Disability Matters, an organization with the mission to encourage every church to embrace disability.

If your child has an individualized education program (IEP), by the time school begins — aside from the special education teacher and IEP team — it is possible not all of your child's teachers will have read their IEP. As kids move on to middle and high school, you may find this happening more and more, though it can happen in elementary school too. Sometimes, the only thing teachers know about your child is that they will be in their classroom and whether or not they will have a paraprofessional with them for support.

At the beginning of the school year, supports should already be set in place to welcome your child, but that is not always the reality. It's possible your child's teacher has not read the IEP because they haven't received a copy by the time the first day rolls around. To me, that's concerning.

Last year, my middle child, who has an IEP, started middle school. Suddenly, we had more than one teacher to work with — not counting teachers for specials such as choir or physical education. I wasn't sure how many of her teachers

would get a copy of her IEP and read it, even as they planned the year. One of the accommodations she receives is where she sits. She needs her desk to be wheelchair-accessible and close to the front of the class. We have always met with teachers before the open-house to ensure she gets some one-on-one time with them without distractions. Last year, almost every classroom was not set up in a way that met the seating requirements of her IEP. We ended helping teachers rearrange their classrooms so they were accessible to my child.

What is the best way to address these issues? Enter our one-page IEP Lite.

It is possible you may have been creating these one-page profiles for your child for years — many parents have. If you Google "student profiles" you will get all sorts of ideas and examples. There are so many, it can become overwhelming.

I've traced back these documents as far as 2004 when Helen Sanderson Associates developed its one-page profiles. Over the last 15 years, one-page profiles have

changed and evolved but are always based around person-centered planning.

Person-centered planning promotes the human side of an IEP by bringing your child — with their strengths, gifts, what works and doesn't work — to the forefront. Basically, you want educators to see your child first, their diagnosis second. What do you want teachers to know about your child? What will help them understand your child better as a person?

While person-centered planning is more common when young adults with disabilities transition out of school or seek employment, advocates have been encouraging parents to take this approach as early as the first day a child begins school. It should have the information you want people to know about your loved one. This will help teachers and educators understand the vision you have for your child's future.

As I was trying to figure out how best to connect with each of my child's teachers,

continued next page

I came across a blog post from “our three little birds,” who adapted a template based off of a person-centered planning session led by Roberta Dunn of FACT. I thought her template was super cute, so I created my own.

Now that I have received feedback from educators and am more experienced with one-page student profiles — and now that my daughter with Down syndrome is entering middle school — I see the need for a document that looks more professional. These profiles are my kids’ “resumes.” Most person-centered plans focus on strengths, what works and what doesn’t work, but I feel it is important to include weakness, as well as key points from the IEP that teachers needed to know about and follow.

Adding an IEP section breaks away from a person-centered approach and changes the tone, but I feel very strongly the key points from my child’s IEP should be included. Why? Because these are the key points I will be making sure are followed. This section also holds the teacher accountable and focuses on their role. These one-sheets can help facilitate conversations and allow teachers to ask ques-

tions. While I want teachers to see my child first and disability second (person-centered approach), I also mean business. I am taking a step to help them understand how my child’s disability impacts their learning, their time in the classroom and interactions with peers and educators. This is why in these profiles, I include IEP-worthy information throughout the document. This is not the time to tell the teacher my child has changed my life for

my child and how her disability impacts her when she is in their classroom? This information can still be person-centered, yet pulling from the accommodations, modifications and accessibility needed per her IEP.

These profiles can easily become two or three pages, but it is important to focus on just one page. You want it to be as easily “digestible” as possible, with bullet

points and short sentences. If you feel you have more to say, maybe you write a separate letter of introduction or arrange a face-to-face meeting. Remember, we are approaching this as a professional “resume” for our kids.

I created two editable templates so you can easily create a student profile for your child. Last year, teachers were really appreciative of the handout. When I posted it on my

Facebook page, I even had teachers

who said they wish they had a template like it so they could hand it to their students (or the students’ parents). One template has two columns, which you can use it for any class or grade. The other template has one column and has the option of including the class name, teacher name and your child’s grade.

Treat me with dignity and respect. I am not a little kid, I am 12, so please don't use baby talk, it feels condescending. I want to be treated as a real person. My disability (cerebral palsy) does not define who I am, but it is part of my identity. I can make my own choices. Please listen to what I have to say when it comes to my disability or accommodations I need, I know my body best.

the better, she is a ray of sunshine and if they get to know her they will love her, too. This is the time to say she can follow directions, but she needs to be given them one at a time. She loves books, but she is still below reading grade level and needs materials to be accessible to her. Basically, what does the teacher need to know about

Tips for filling out the templates:

- Create a vision statement, ideally with your child. If your child is older, have them write their own vision or personal statement. My daughter wrote hers last year:

Treat me with dignity and respect. I am not a little kid, I am 12, so please don't use baby talk, it feels condescending. I want to be treated as a real person. My disability (cerebral palsy) does not define who I am, but it is part of my identity. I can make my own choices. Please listen to what I have to say when it comes to my disability or accommodations I need, I know my body best.

- This is not the time to get lengthy. Think clear and concise, ideally using short bullet points. What should the teacher absolutely know about your child?

- IEP key points are just that, key points.

- If your child is in middle school or high school, make one for each teacher and include information only relevant to each class.

For example, if your child struggles with math and has a modified curriculum, exclude that in the document you give their history teacher. But you may want to include in the IEP section that tests are to be modified, with no time limit and with adult support for reading.

I printed out the one-sheets, now what?

Don’t just hand them out and expect the teachers to read them later. Teachers are super busy at the beginning of the year and this may just go on a pile of things to get to later.

Bring them to each teacher at the open-house or preferably schedule a time before school begins. Read them together, this way you know they have the information and have a chance to ask questions. I had a few teachers express they were quite appreciative of having this information handy.

My daughter had some pretty great conversations with teachers based on her student profile and it made her feel much better

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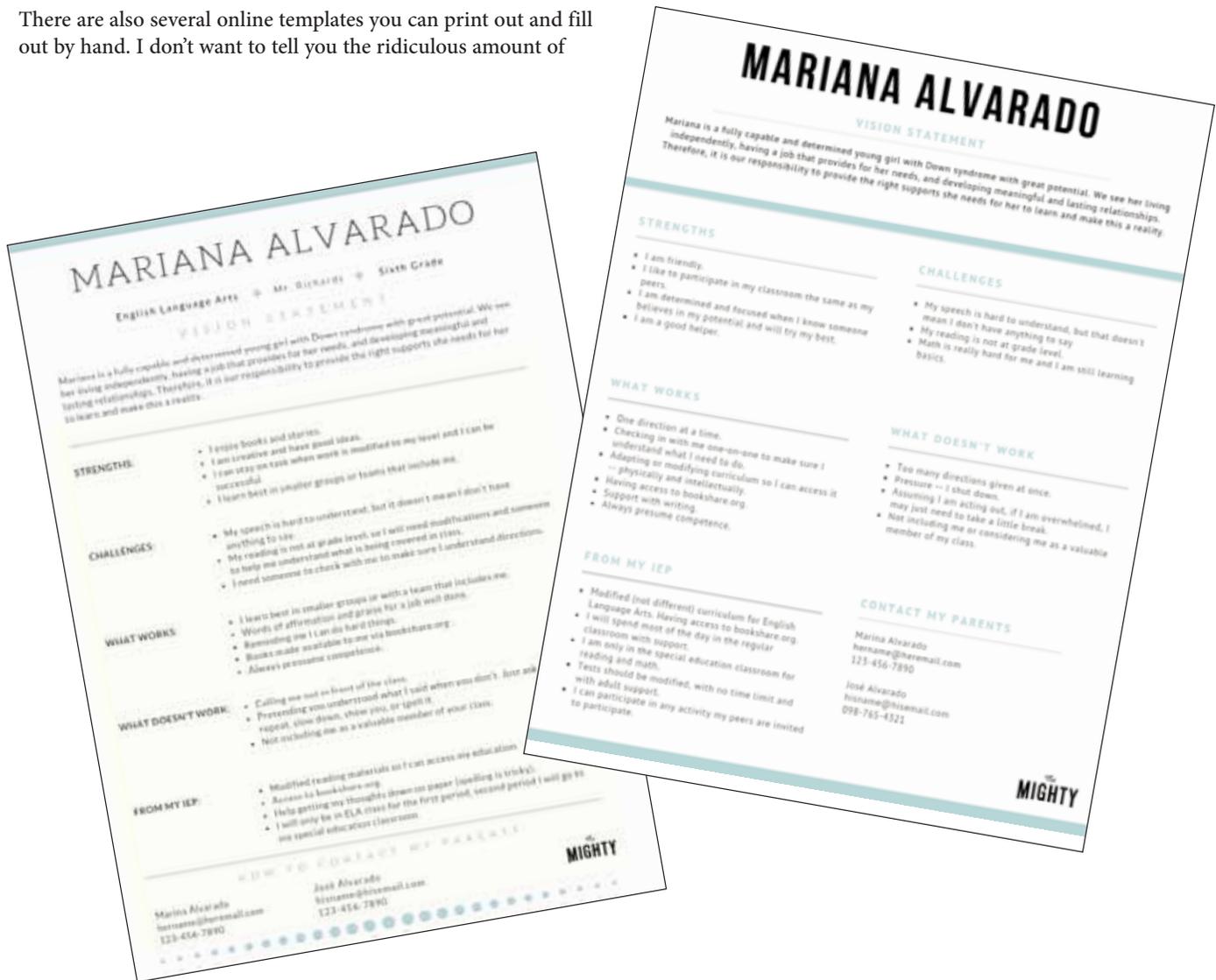
about beginning the school year. As her little sister is joining her in middle school, I am creating these profiles for two of my kids with IEPs.

hours it took me to create these editable templates, but I did it so you don't have to spend the time doing it. ■

Last, if you are super creative and you just want to do your own thing, Canva is a free service you can use to create a template. <https://www.canva.com>

Once you create your own, share an image with us here on The Mighty! #StudentProfile

There are also several online templates you can print out and fill out by hand. I don't want to tell you the ridiculous amount of



Editor's note:

These templates can be downloaded from <https://themighty.com>

Also follow Ellen Stumbo at

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



THE DISABILITY VOTE: AN INCREASING VOTER BLOC THAT WILL IMPACT 2020



NOVEMBER 5, 2019

New Report Highlights Turnout Surge by Disabled Voters in 2018

For Immediate Release: July 10, 2019

Contact: Keri Gray, (202) 521-4310, kgray@aapd.com

Washington, D.C. – In 2020, approximately 23% of the American electorate — over 35 million individuals — will be people with disabilities. As demographic changes are unfolding, it is becoming increasingly clear that voter turnout is more diverse than ever. However, many candidates are missing the impact of the disability vote.

According to a new report by Dr. Lisa Schur and Dr. Douglas Kruse at Rutgers University, “voter turnout surged by 8.5 points in 2018 among citizens with disabilities relative to the 2014 midterm elections.” This turnout surge indicates that disabled voters will be an increasingly powerful voting bloc in 2020. The report also shows a significant increase in the disability vote in states such as: Texas, New Jersey, Florida, Arizona, Georgia, and Pennsylvania. These increases are no surprise to the disability community that has been hard at work on voter engagement activities through the REV UP campaign.

REV UP (which stands for Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!) is a non-partisan initiative of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) — in partnership with numerous disability organizations around the country — to build the influence of the disability vote and increase the political power of the disability community. Each year, on the third week of July, AAPD and its REV UP network coordinates National Disability Voter Registration Week (NDVRW), happening this year on July 15-19. Based on research conducted by Drs. Schur and Kruse, “the increase in turnout between 2014 and 2018 among people with disabilities was 9.0% in REV UP states compared to 5.7% in non-REV UP states.” Overall, Schur and Kruse found that the REV UP campaign may have contributed an additional 257,000 disability votes in 2018. (Fact Sheet: Estimating the Effect of the REVUP Campaign on Disability Turnout).

“Leading up to every election since 2016, our REV UP partners around the country have been organizing to get out the disability vote,” said Helena Berger, President and CEO of AAPD. “With 23% of the vote up for grabs, candidates should be hiring campaign staff with disabilities, responding to our issues, making sure their campaigns are fully accessible, including their website, and for the presidential candidates, completing the AAPD/NCIL/REV UP Presidential Candidate Questionnaire. The research out of Rutgers University not only proves there’s a disability vote, but an increasing one, and every candidate running for political office would be wise to court it.”

Find more information on the report, Disability and Voter Turnout in the 2018 Elections, at this link:

<https://smlr.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/2018disabilityturnout.pdf>.

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AAPD is a convener, connector, and catalyst for change, increasing the political and economic power of people with disabilities. As one of the leading national cross-disability civil rights organizations, AAPD advocates for the full recognition of rights for the over 60 million Americans with disabilities. AAPD’s programs and initiatives have been effective in mobilizing the disability community through communications advocacy; cultivating and training new and emerging leaders with disabilities through leadership development programs; increasing the political participation of Americans with disabilities and elevating the power of the disability vote through the REV UP (Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!) Campaign; and advancing disability inclusion in the workplace through the Disability Equality Index (DEI) — the nation’s leading corporate benchmarking tool for disability equality and inclusion. To learn more about AAPD, visit www.aapd.com



★ VIRGINIA ★
DEPARTMENT *of* ELECTIONS

Everything you need to know to vote in Virginia
www.elections.virginia.gov/index.html



You will need to show one acceptable photo identification card (photo ID) whenever you vote in person. This is Virginia law for all voters.

Many types of photo ID are acceptable for voting in Virginia. You only need to show ONE acceptable photo ID to vote. Photo IDs can be used to vote up to one year after the ID has expired.

Acceptable forms of valid identification:

- Virginia driver's license
- Virginia DMV-issued photo ID
- United States passport
- Employer-issued photo ID
- Student photo ID issued by a school, college, or university located in Virginia
- Other U.S. or Virginia government-issued photo ID
- Tribal enrollment or other tribal photo ID
- Virginia Voter Photo ID card

Need a photo ID?

If you don't have an ID, simply go to your nearest voter registration office to get a free Voter Photo ID, even on Election Day! You will be required to complete a photo ID application, have your photo taken and to sign a digital signature pad.

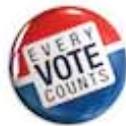
Forgot your photo ID on Election Day?

If you get to your polling place without acceptable photo ID, you can vote a provisional ballot. You will be given instructions on what to do so your vote can count.

How and where can I register to vote?

Any person, regardless of their disability status, has the right to register to vote at any office or agency that provides such a service. These offices include but are not limited to: Department of Health (VDH), Department of Social Services (DSS), Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services (DBHDS), Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Department for the Deaf and Hard of

Hearing (VDDHH), and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI). Your local Registrar's Office also has registration forms and should be able to accommodate any special need.



Accessibility

Is curbside voting still available for those who wish to use it?

Yes, curbside voting is still available for people ages 65 and older, or any person with a physical disability. The voter shall be afforded every opportunity to vote in a private and independent fashion, but voting equipment must remain in the view of the election officers.

Will I be able to get into the polling place on my own?

Federal and state laws mandate that all polling places, including all locations for in-person absentee voting, must be fully accessible to elderly voters and voters with disabilities; state law further requires curbside voting be available at all these locations for voters age 65 or over or with physical disabilities. See above discussion of curbside voting.

Voters with continuing disabilities may apply annually to receive absentee ballots for all elections within a given year using the Annual Absentee Ballot Application.

Is the voting equipment in my polling place going to be accessible?

State law and federal law (the Help America Vote Act) require every polling location in Virginia must be equipped with at least one accessible voting system that will allow all voters with a disability to vote the same private and independent manner as a voter without a disability.

I understand that with the changes in elections services I should not need assistance from anyone, but can I still have assistance if I wish to?

Yes, you can. If any voter who requires assistance in voting

due to a physical disability or inability to read or write can receive assistance if they request it. Any of the officers of election can advise you of your rights in this area.

Are people with cognitive disabilities allowed to register and vote?

Yes. A registered voter with cognitive disabilities can be eligible to vote if not adjudicated mentally incapacitated by a court of law.

What if I feel that my rights to accessible registration and voting have been violated?

Please document your complaint using the Voter Complaints area of our website. You may also contact your voter registrar or electoral board locally or the Department's Accessibility Coordinator Terry Wagoner at (804) 864-8937 or terry.wagoner@elections.virginia.gov. Contact information for your local voting administration can be found using our online tool at <https://elections.virginia.gov/LocalGR>.



Additional Resources

• *The Americans with Disabilities Act and Other Federal Laws ~ Protecting the Rights of Voters with Disabilities*

Posted on U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division – Disability Rights Section
www.ada.gov/ada_voting/ada_voting_fa.htm

• *Resources for Voters with Disabilities*

Page on U.S. Election Assistance Commission with many relevant resources, both statewide and national.
www.eac.gov/voter_resources/resources_for_voters_with_disabilities.aspx

• *ADA Checklist for Polling Places*

This document is an updated technical assistance publication on polling place accessibility for voters with disabilities. The publication includes information about key areas of a facility that must be accessible to voters with mobility or vision disabilities, options for low-cost temporary measures for removing barriers, and a survey to guide election officials in evaluating the accessibility of facilities used or being considered for use as polling places.
www.ada.gov/votingck.htm



Vote Smart's mission is to provide free, factual, unbiased information on candidates and elected officials to ALL Americans.
<https://votesmart.org>

The Voter's Self-Defense System (Partial list)

Every candidate and elected official from President to local government can be easily and instantly accessed through the Voter's Self-Defense System:



Voting Records – https://votesmart.org/bills#.WezgrBR_Jno

Vote Smart digests key legislation in Congress and all 50 states into easy-to-understand summaries, making it easy to compare what your representatives said during the campaign with how they actually voted on the record.



Biographical & Contact Information – https://votesmart.org/search#.Wezh9BR_Jno

From their previous professions, education, family life, and organizational memberships to their social media accounts and latest email addresses.



Issue Positions (Political Courage Test) – https://votesmart.org/about/political-courage-test#.WeziPhR_Jno

We test thousands of candidates for President, Congress, Governor and State Legislature with our Political Courage Test. The Test accurately measures candidates' willingness to provide voters with their positions on the issues they will most likely face if elected.



Interest Group Ratings – <https://votesmart.org/interest-groups>

See how over 400 national and 1300 state special interest groups evaluate your representatives. Despite their bias, special interest group ratings can help indicate where an incumbent has stood on a particular set of issues.



Campaign Finances – https://votesmart.org/search#.WezjRRR_Jno

How much money did your representatives raise and from whom?

<https://votesmart.org>

REGISTER TODAY

SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

Crystal City Marriott at
Reagan National Airport,
Arlington, VA



— — — — — →
NOD ANNUAL FORUM +
LEADING DISABILITY EMPLOYERS' DINNER

SHIFTING THE TALENT PARADIGM: INCLUSIVE CULTURE FOR A MODERN WORKFORCE

BE A CHANGE AGENT

We know that a truly inclusive culture starts at the top. But it doesn't end there. To turn a chief executive's mandate for a more diverse and inclusive culture into action, senior corporate leaders must deploy the best change management tactics.

The culture change imperative is not limited to corporate diversity and inclusion leaders. Their counterparts in government, the military, academia, and other departments in high-profile global companies, can teach us how to become effective change agents.

What tools, tactics and personal attributes are most effective for creating an inclusive culture? A culture that embraces disability as a diversity segment alongside all others?

The 2019 NOD Annual Corporate Leadership Council Forum will explore how executives in all these sectors — business, government, the military and academia — have created meaningful change; deepened leadership support for diversity, equity and inclusion; established disability as a diversity segment; and been successful at leading culture change.

What to Expect:

Dynamic changemakers from government, the military, academia and major companies, will describe how they successfully led and managed organizational culture change, especially in diversity, equity and inclusion.

Leading experts from allied fields of adaptive leadership, change management, reflective practice, and social "intrapreneurship" will discuss the challenges of translating a culture change mandate from the top to every employee on staff.

We'll discuss how these lessons can be applied to practices within your organization in order to cultivate a more disability-inclusive workforce.

In addition to valuable networking opportunities with speakers and disability leaders, participants will leave with a sense of their own leadership model, and with tools to turn ideas into action.

REGISTER TODAY: Tickets, tables, advertisements and sponsorships available at <http://bit.ly/2019NODforum>

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION ON
DISABILITY

At NCD's Recommendation, All U.S. Dental Schools Will Train Students To Manage Treatment Of People With Intellectual, Developmental Disabilities



National Council on Disability • Aug 14, 2019, 15:15 ET

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- As recommended by the National Council on Disability (NCD), all U.S. dental schools must now revamp their curricula and training programs to be inclusive of patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD).

The Council on Dental Accreditation (CODA) recently passed votes requiring dental schools to now train their students in managing treatment of patients with ID/DD. Previously, patients with ID/DD were largely unable to obtain dental care treatment because dental students were simply not required to learn to manage their treatment.

"Every dental patient in America deserves the same care, whether or not they have a disability," said NCD Chairman Neil Romano. "NCD applauds this decision that we view as necessary for people with ID/DD to obtain critical access to dental treatment, which is critical to the total health of all people."

CODA held and passed four related votes regarding the predoctoral dental, orthodontics, dental hygiene, and dental assistant programs:

For predoctoral programs and orthodontics programs, dental students must be trained to assess and manage the treatment of patients with "special needs [sic]."

For dental hygiene programs, students must be competent in providing care to "special needs [sic]" patient populations.

For dental assistant programs, students must be familiarized with patients with "special needs [sic]" including patients whose medical, physical, psychological, or social conditions make it necessary to modify normal dental routines.

CODA generally defines people with "special needs (sic)" as people with developmental disabilities, cognitive impairment, complex medical problems, significant physical limitations, and the vulnerable elderly.

Changes for the predoctoral dental, dental hygiene, and dental assistant programs are required to take effect by July 1, 2020, with changes to the orthodontics programs required by Jan. 1.

NCD first made recommendations to CODA following its 2017 issue brief "Neglected for Too Long: Dental Care for Patients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities," in which NCD's findings included:

Adults with developmental disabilities are at risk for multiple health problems including poor oral health.

People with I/DD regularly face an uphill battle in finding clinicians properly trained to treat them because most dentists lack the proper training and exposure with respect to the health and psychosocial needs of this population.

According to one study, more than 50 percent of dental and medical school deans have stated that their graduates are not competent to treat patients with I/DD; as a result, people with I/DD are more likely to have poor oral hygiene, periodontal disease, and untreated dental caries than are members of the general population.

People with I/DD have been more likely to not have had their teeth cleaned in the past five years, or never to have had their teeth cleaned, than those who are not disabled. Due to the lack of proper skills among dentists, dental care is often more difficult to find than any other type of service for people with I/DD.

Last year, NCD successfully worked with the American Dental Association to revise its Code of Professional Conduct to state that "dentists shall not refuse to accept patients into their practice or deny dental service to patients because of the patient's...disability." This code revision was adopted by many states as state law of professional conduct.

First established as an advisory council within the Department of Education in 1978, NCD became an independent federal agency in 1984. In 1986, NCD recommended enactment of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and drafted the first version of the bill which was introduced in the House and Senate in 1988. Since enactment of the ADA in 1990, NCD has continued to play a leading role in crafting disability policy, and advising the President, Congress and other federal agencies on disability policies, programs, and practices.

~ SOURCE National Council on Disability
<https://ncd.gov>

Loudoun County Is Set To Host The Region's First Special Olympics In The Fall Of 2020.

Reprinted with thanks from *The Loudoun Times Mirror*
By John Battiston, jbattiston@loudountimes.com
August 1, 2019



The upcoming Loudoun campus of Paul VI Catholic High School will serve as the event's home base.

Special Olympics organizes regional, state, national and international competitions for athletes with physical and intellectual disabilities. The organization offers more than 30 Olympic-style individual and team sports.

The Loudoun games, slated to take place Oct. 3, 2020, is expected to include season-appropriate sports such as soccer, bocce, volleyball and flag football. As per Special Olympics tradition, the top three performers in each event will receive medals, while the rest will be presented with ribbons.

"We would like to have fall sports featured that our athletes are training and competing in to get them ready for the fall state-level championship in Virginia Beach, which will take place in November," Special Olympics Virginia Potomac Region Senior Director Veronica Jennings said.

Jennings estimates that approximately 500 athletes from the region will take part in the games. She says Paul VI Catholic High School was chosen to host the event because of its many planned sporting facilities, as well as its longtime connection to Special Olympics through the school's Options Program, which serves students with special needs.

"Special Olympics is dear to PVI's heart as our Options Program is starting its 21st year of inclusion in our school. Students in the Options Program have participated in athletics at PVI and Special Olympics for years," Head of School Virginia Colwell said. Leesburg resident Bruce Gemmill, senior vice president of MainStreet Bank and a member of the Board of Directors of Special

Olympics in Loudoun, jumped at the idea of having northern Virginia's first regional games. Young athletes from Loudoun, Prince William and Fauquier counties, as well as Prince George's County, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., will be invited to participate.

"This will be the first event of its kind in Loudoun and in northern Virginia as a whole," Gemmill said. "Anyone who attends will be supporting a great organization and wonderful athletes."

Housing for participants and their families will be available at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, the largest hospitality facility in Loudoun. Geoff Lawson, the National Conference Center's vice president and general manager, was enthusiastic



when approached by Gemmill to contribute to the project.

The NCC has run a program to give people with disabilities job experience for several years.

"This is all about awareness," Lawson said. "If you want a serious change in perspective, get involved with kids with special needs. It will change your life perspective, it will

change your work perspective."

Lawson expects that the NCC will host nearly 1,000 people for the event. The facility will also organize an athlete dinner and dance the night before the games, an idea presented to Gemmill by several athletes.

"I said, 'You want a dance? By golly, you're going to get a dance,'" Gemmill said.

As with other Special Olympics events, the Loudoun games will rely on sponsorships, other partnerships and volunteer work to run smoothly. Jennings estimates that the event will require around 200 volunteers throughout the day, with jobs ranging from setup and athlete check-in to refereeing the games.

Parker Teel, CEO of Teel Construction in Fairfax, will give his employees the opportunity to contribute to the games as part of the company's volunteer time-off program, which affords each employee up to three days of paid leave to volunteer with the charity of his or her choice.

Organizers are hopeful other businesses will offer similar incentives, and Jennings encourages all members of the community to consider volunteering at the games.

"Special Olympics doesn't just benefit our athletes and families; it's a wonderful organization that benefits and promotes inclusion for the whole community. It's a great opportunity for people to come out and get to know the athletes as people, to be a part of something that's very positive and inspiring," Jennings said.

More information regarding Special Olympics Virginia can be found at www.specialolympicsva.org. ■

Workshop:

Social Security and Disability Determinations

Tuesday, September 24th - 11:00 a.m.

PLEASE
DO NOT
STAPLE
IN THIS
AREA

Social Security Disability Form



(Sponsor's SSN) (SSN or ID) (SSN) (ID) OTHER 1a I.D. NUMBER

3 MM DD YY BIRTH DATE SEX M F 4 NAME (last, first, middle initial)

6 STAT

SOCIAL SECURITY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Tuesday, September 24th – 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
The Arc of Northern Virginia
2755 Hartland Road, Suite 200
Falls Church, VA 22041

Join us to learn about applying for Social Security benefits and who is eligible, as well as how the Virginia Office of Disability Determination Services decides if someone has a disability that qualifies them for adult Medicaid and Social Security. Come to learn and ask questions on this complicated and critical topic.

Presented by:

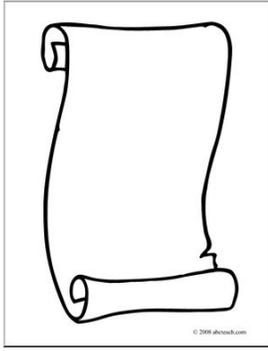
Vida Cyrus, Professional Relations Officer for the Northern Regional Office of the Virginia Disability Determination Services.

There are two ways to attend this workshop:

- Join us in our conference room to hear our speaker in-person and network with other attendees, or
- Listen LIVE via webinar on your computer or tablet.

***Remember, our Webinars and Workshops are FREE to attend,
but pre-registration is required.***

***For more information and to register, visit
<https://thearcofnova.org/programs/info-referral/ds-ls-workshops/>***



McEachin & Langevin Re-Introduce Legislation to Strengthen the Landmark ADA Civil Rights Law & Help More Small Businesses Become Accessible

July 25, 2019 Press Release

The 29th Anniversary of the American Disabilities Act was July 26th

Contact: Ariana Valderrama • (202) 225-6365

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman A. Donald McEachin (VA-04) re-introduced the Disabled Access Credit Expansion Act today with Congressman Jim Langevin (RI-02) to make it easier for small businesses to become accessible for people with disabilities and help those businesses comply with the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This legislation bolsters the existing Disabled Access Credit (DAC), which helps businesses pay for renovations by doubling the maximum tax credit and allowing more small businesses to receive it. The legislation also invests in programs that mediate ADA-related disputes to avoid additional litigation and help individuals and businesses understand the ADA. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), the Ranking Member of the Senate Aging Committee Bob Casey (D-PA) and U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Ed Markey (D-MA) introduced companion legislation in the Senate.

“We are reintroducing the DACE Act because it is imperative that we improve access for Americans with disabilities,” said Congressman A. Donald McEachin. “By expanding the tax credit that allows small business owners to proactively accommodate and include those with disabilities, the DACE Act renews our commitment to fairness and equal access. On the eve of the 29th anniversary of the ADA, I am humbled to reintroduce this bill with Congressman Langevin and Senator Duckworth to support both Americans with disabilities and our small business community.”

“The Americans with Disabilities Act is a groundbreaking civil rights law that has had profound impacts on me and millions of my fellow citizens,” said Congressman Jim Langevin, co-chair of the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus. “However, twenty-nine years after it was signed into law, we’re still fighting to break down barriers to access and inclusion. The Disabled Access Credit Expansion Act will help more small businesses comply with the ADA and ensure our communities are open to all. I’m proud to spearhead this effort with Congressman McEachin in the House, and I look forward to working with Senator Duckworth to get this bill signed into law.”

“I’m proud to work with my colleagues on this important legislation to strengthen the ADA and give Americans with disabilities increased opportunity to fully participate in our society,” Senator Duckworth said. “This bill will help more businesses across the country comply with a nearly 30-year-old law that protects the rights of people with disabilities. It is a common-sense alternative to misguided efforts that would roll back hard-earned protections for people with disabilities by rewarding businesses who refuse to comply with the ADA instead of encouraging them to become accessible.”

“After 29 years, many businesses still struggle to provide full access to people with disabilities, said disAbility Law Center of Virginia Director Colleen Miller. “This legislation will help to open doors that have been closed for far too long.”

The Disabled Access Credit Expansion Act would:

✎ Expand the Disabled Access Credit (DAC): Increase eligible expenses businesses can write off in order to make their facilities ADA-compliant to \$20,500, double the maximum credit from \$5,000 to \$10,125, and expand the definition of small businesses to companies with gross receipts of \$2.5 million or less from \$1 million or less.

✎ Increase Funding for the ADA Mediation Program: Make the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) ADA Mediation Program eligible to receive funding to train contracted mediators and increase personnel to help individuals with disabilities and businesses reach a resolution without increased litigation. The legislation would appropriate \$1 million for the 2019 fiscal year to support these efforts.

✎ Collect ADA Information Line Data: Require DOJ to provide a report to Congress on the specific types of calls the ADA Information Line receives in order to improve the ways individuals with disabilities and businesses learn about their rights and how facilities can become ADA-compliant. ###

Press Release from the Office of
A. Donald McEachin



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Suffolk, VA 23434
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ABLE ACCOUNTS VS. SPECIAL NEEDS TRUSTS SEMINAR

Educate Yourself!

Sheri R. Abrams, Virginia Special Needs Planning Attorney, will be joining Tia Marsili, Director of Trusts from The Arc of Northern Virginia, in an informative presentation for families who have members with special needs and community members. This session will provide an overview of ABLE Accounts in Virginia and when this type of account may be appropriate, as well as an overview of three different types of Special Needs Trusts. Included will be the similarities and differences among these three trusts and when each type should be used.

About Sheri

Sheri has worked for over twenty-four years in the areas of Social Security Disability Law, Special Needs Planning, Elder Law & Estate Planning. Sheri's niche-within-a-niche is Social Security Disability Law and the special needs area of estate planning (Special Needs Trusts & Guardianship), which require additional care and experience, to properly understand and meet the needs of the community involved. Since 2015, Sheri's office has been part of ServiceSource's Disability Resource Center in Oakton, Virginia.

About Tia

Tia oversees the Trust department at The Arc of Northern Virginia. She specializes in educating families, individuals, agencies, and attorneys about comprehensive futures planning and Special Needs Trusts. She provides the community with an array of presentations and small group discussions and has over 23 years of experience working in the disability services field.

SAVE THE DATE!

Thursday, October 3, 2019

9:30 AM-10:00 AM — Registration

10:00 AM — 12:00 PM Presentation

ServiceSource Disability Resource Center
3rd Floor

10467 White Granite Drive

Oakton, VA 22124

(Parking lot entrance is across from Flagpole Ln)

RSVP DETAILS

RSVP [HERE](#) or go to

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/17083461963>

Please contact 703-461-1192 or

familysupportservices@servicesource.org to

request any accommodations



Speakers come from a diversity of backgrounds and cover a range of topics and viewpoints. Statements of fact and opinions expressed during presentations are those of the speakers individually and, unless expressly stated to the contrary, do not necessarily represent the opinions or position of ServiceSource, Inc. or its cosponsors. ServiceSource, Inc and its cosponsors do not endorse or approve, and assumes no responsibility for, the content, accuracy or completeness of the information presented. Attendees should also note that sessions may be documented through photo or video and published in various media, including print, audio and video formats without further notice.

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Food Allergy Research & Education

foodallergy.org

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