

DDDS

Self Advocate Coordinators

2019

End of Year
Report



Self Advocate Coordinators at Work!

Who are the SACS?

- Legislature Supported
- A voice of the people
- Making a difference



What do they do?

- Promote Self Advocacy -Spread the Word!
- Promote individual involvement
- Develop leaders
- Support Regional and State activities





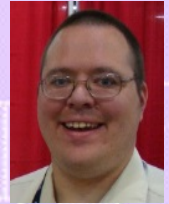
James Louchen

Yana Razumnaya



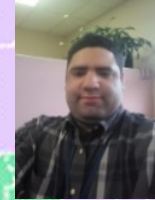
North

Varian Salters



West

Kevin Arce



Jeremy Powell

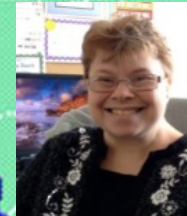


Jossie Torres

South



Kellie Hartigan



Carol Grabbe



Genna Lewis



Nyrka Soto

DDS

West Region SAC's

James Louchen

Self Advocate Coordinator

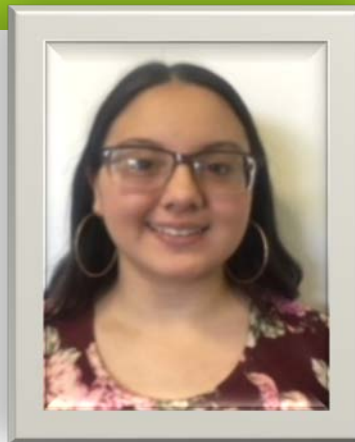
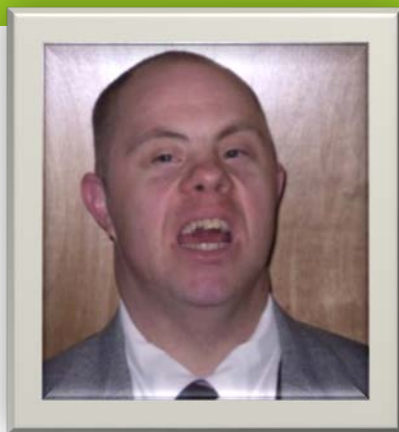
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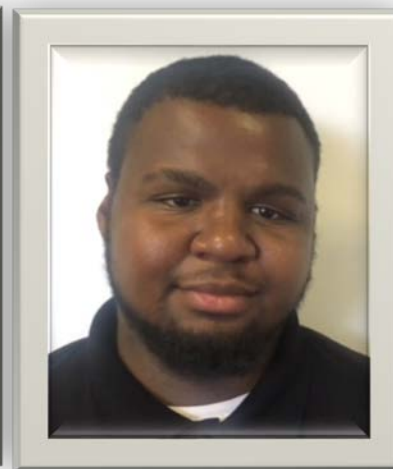
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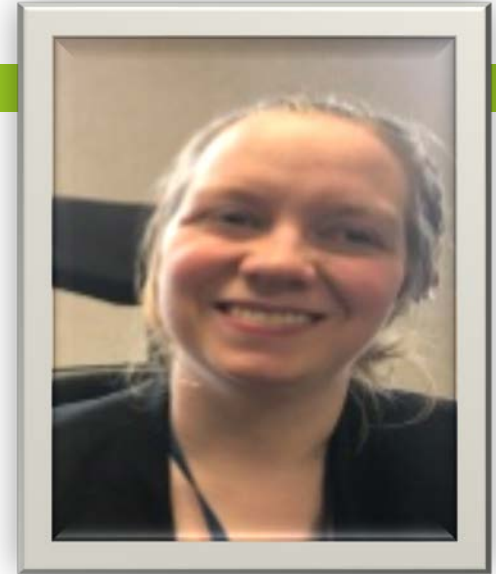
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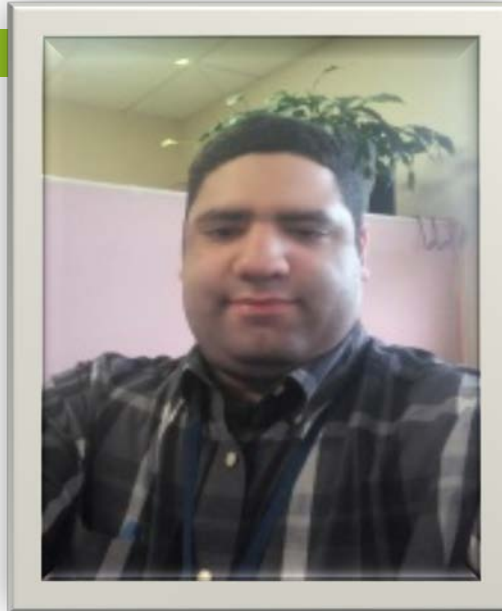
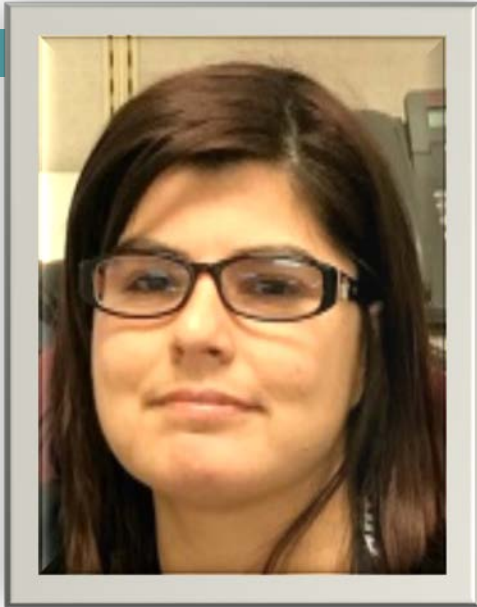
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Said Good-By to



Genna Lewis



Nyrka Soto

SELF ADVOCATE COORDINATORS are the VOICE OF DDS!

- **CT Legislature Supported DDS in Creating State Position – 2004**
- **State Employees representing the voices of the people supported by DDS**
- **SACs lead the department in Making A Difference!**



Continue to PROMOTE: WE are People. Call ME by MY Name!

- February 2015 The DDS Self Advocate Coordinators (SACs) unveiled a new initiative, supporting and recognizing “People First Language.”
- We are People –Call Me by My Name campaign - asks everyone to be called by their given name
- SACs hope to eliminate the words and terms:

"client"

"patient",

"ward"

"them"

"handicapped"

and the "R" word - "retarded".



SACs continue to challenge people to take the pledge!



- **The Disability Awareness Pledge Reaffirms a commitment to seeing the person and not the disability.**
- **Over 2400 people have taken the Pledge!**
- **The SACs are challenging each one of us to be the change that makes a difference.**

 **TAKE THE
PLEDGE**

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?Q=561446&A=2645>

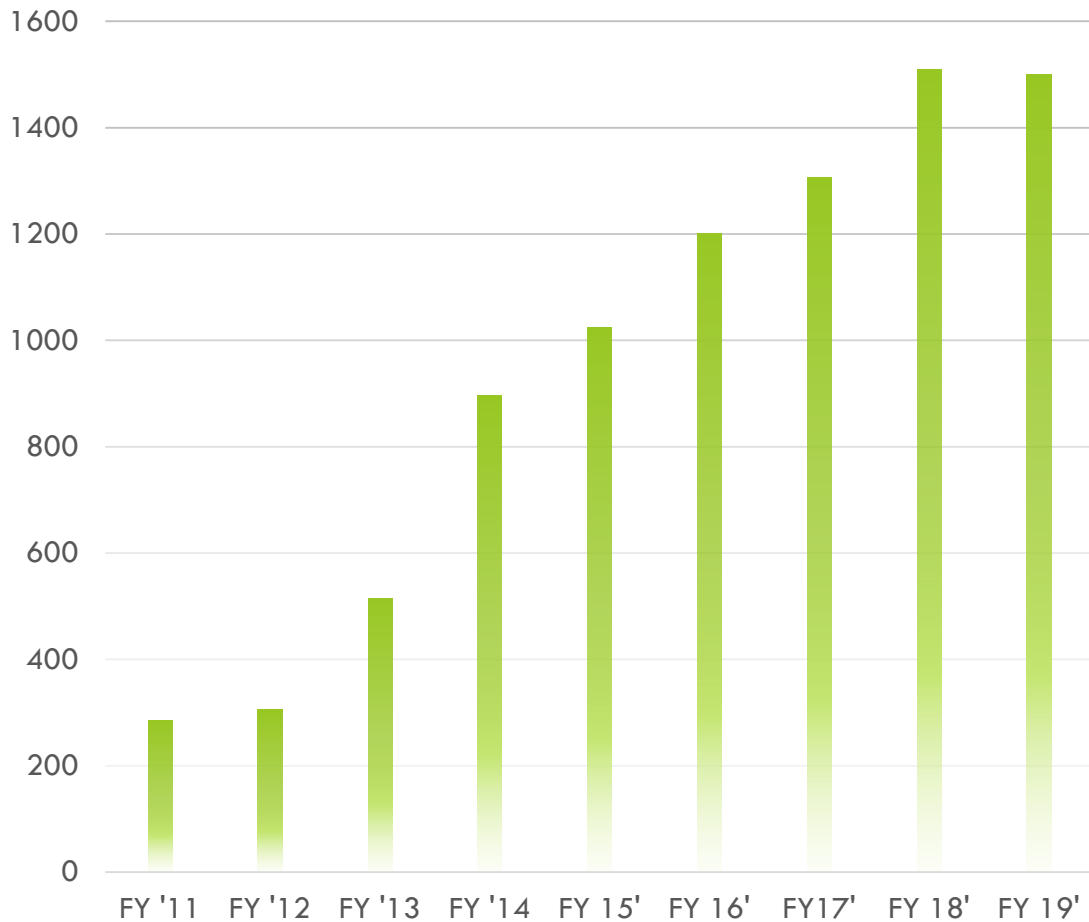
Self Advocacy- Building Voices



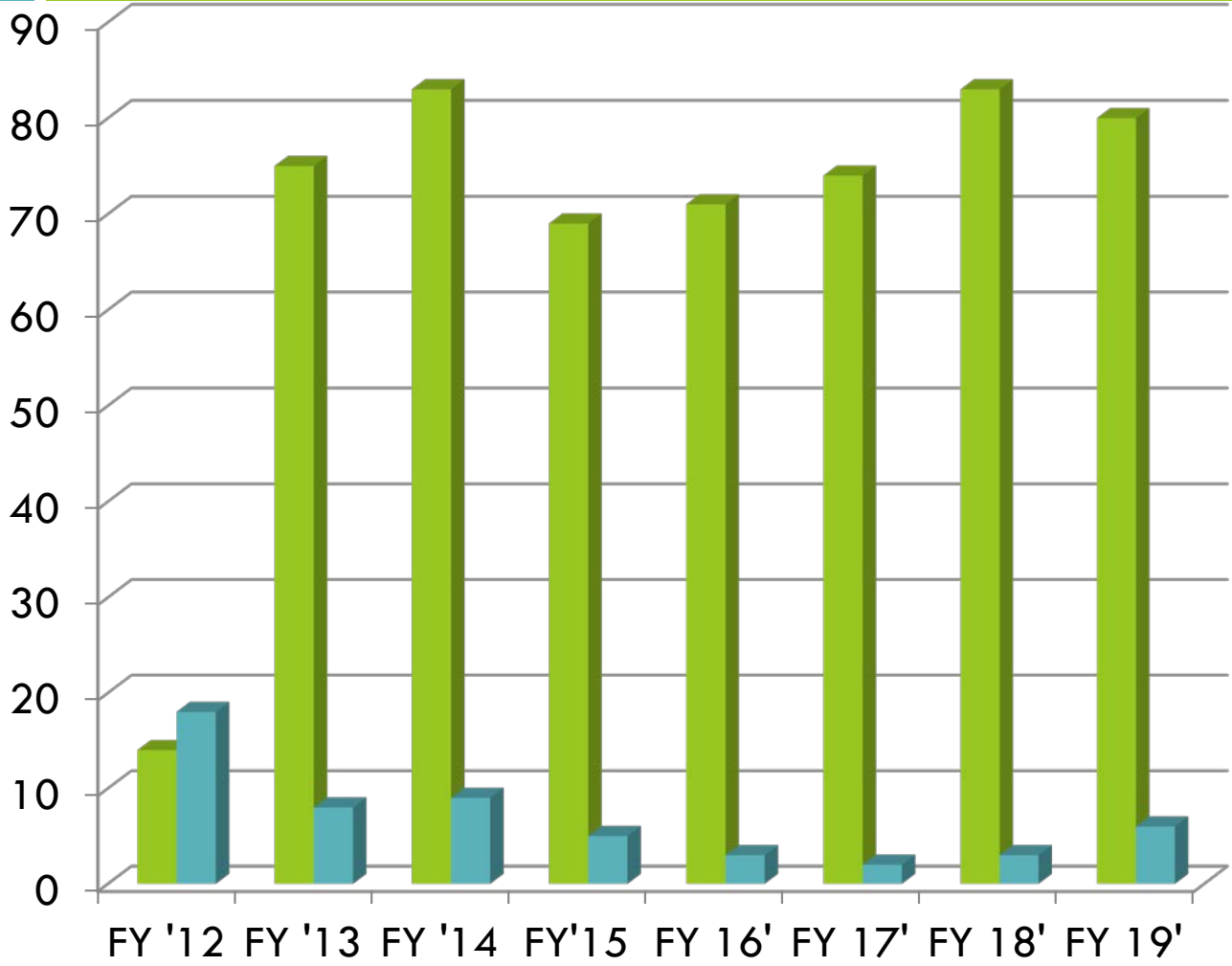
Empowering Others to Speak Up!

- ❑ Being an IP Buddy and developing IP Buddies to support individual advocacy
- ❑ Supporting and participating in “CT Cross Disability Alliance”
- ❑ NCI’s – Peer Interviewing and sharing SA Information
- ❑ Developing, supporting, and expanding Self Advocacy Groups in CT
- ❑ Working with all of the CT Private Providers to make sure advocates have a voice

SELF ADVOCACY CONTINUES TO GROW



Statewide Self Advocacy Groups



■ # SA Groups

■ # of Agency SA Groups in Process



Advocate



**Promote
Self Advocacy
Spread the Word!**

Knowledge is Power!

- All SACs have a Focus Area
- Regular meetings with DDS Administration to discuss issues that are important to everyone who receives services from DDS
- FAB Topics – Shared with the SA Groups

Fun

Advocacy

Brain Power



Leadership

- **Statewide and Regional conferences and trainings**
- **Committee work:**
 - **Hiring Interview Committees, Qualified Provider interviews, Provider Qualification Review Board, Community Companion Homes, Charting the LifeCourse, CT Coalition for Aging and Developmental Disabilities, Family & Mentoring Leadership, APSE Board, CT Secondary Transition Symposium, Parents with Disabilities, Housing Committee, Video Monitoring and Human Rights, Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance Committee and Abuse and Neglect Oversight Committee & Financial Task Force**

SACs Provide Education & Training

- Regional Leadership Forums
- Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance
- Peer 2 Peer Support
- DDS New Employee Training
- Supporting the DDS Advocates' Corner website
- Secondary Transition Symposium
- Youth Leadership Forum
- DDS Council
- Job Development Leadership Network
- CT Family Support Network
- Ongoing trainings for Healthy Relationships
- People First Conference
- Developed Success Stories to post on the DDS Advocates Corner Website
- Abuse and Neglect Oversight Committee



Presentations



- **“Peer 2 Peer Support”**
- **“Degrees of Mean”**
- **“Self Determination – Make Life Happen”**
- **“My Voice Matters When I Plan My Life”**
- **“Housing Options”**
- **“Speak Up! Speak Out! – Self Advocacy”**
- **“Advisor Training”**
- **“We Have Human Rights!”**
- **“Employment Now!”**
- **“Next Steps- Speak Up! School Days to Pay Days”**
- **“What’s So Important About Having A Job?”**
- **“I Have an Intellectual Disability: Do I Need a Guardian?”**
- **“Employment First – Real Work for Real Pay!”**
- **“Provider Orientation”**
- **Youth leadership - Advocacy**
 - **“10 Steps to Being a Great Self Advocate”**



SAC's Teach and Promote the 10 Steps of Being a Good Self Advocate

1. Believe in Yourself
2. Realize YOU have Rights
3. Discuss YOUR Concerns
4. Get the FACTS in writing
5. Use the Chain of Command
6. Know your appeal rights
7. Be Assertive and Persistent
8. Use Communication Skills
9. Ask for help
10. FOLLOW-UP



SACS Leading the Way!



- Youth Leadership Forum
- National Core Indicator Surveys – Interviewers
- Individual Plan Buddies
- Annual Mentoring Day
- Presenters at National and State Conferences
- People First Conference
- Transition and Employment Fairs
- Promoting SA and Spreading the word at the Big E

People First Conference 2019!

- Held on June, 22, 2019
- Over 150 advocates attended the conference
- SACs provided 4 workshops
 - Housing Options
 - My Voice Matters when I Plan My Life
 - Make Life Happen
 - Peer 2 Peer





People First Conference

Great Advocacy Happening!

Self Advocacy

SPREADING THE WORD!

Self Advocacy within DDS- Promoting to individuals and all supporting staff the importance of self advocacy and how it empowers people to “Make their life Happen”!



Help spread
the word!

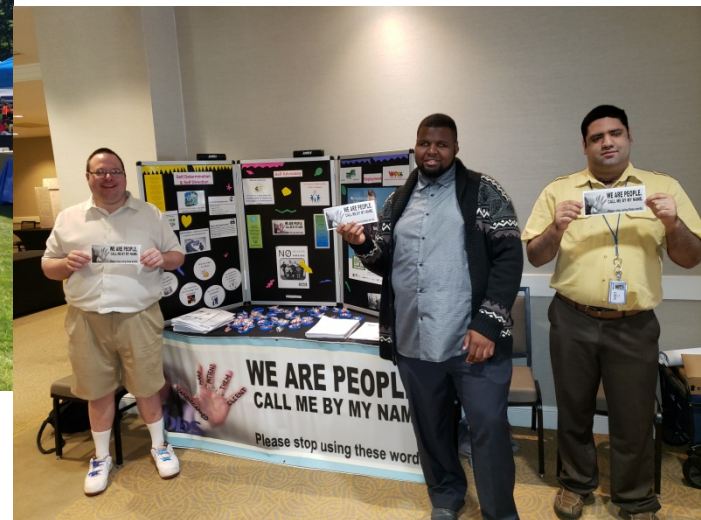
Public Speaking

- ❑ State Conferences – Aging, People First, Employment First Trainings, One Voice, Transition Symposium. Regional and State Presentations
- ❑ Mentoring Day – Promote Employment
- ❑ Disability Awareness Month
- ❑ Promote DDS Mission and Vision
- ❑ Disability Summit
- ❑ New Provider Orientation Material to promote self direction, self determination, self advocacy, peer to peer, and employment!
- ❑ NCI interviewers

SPREADING THE WORD!

Presentation Boards:

- Special Olympics summer games, Regional Resource Fairs, CT Youth Leadership Project/Forum, Transition Fairs, School Fairs, Family Forums, Regional Offices, Big E, Annual APSE Conference, and Disability Summit



SPREADING THE WORD!



SAC FOCUS AREAS



Each of the SACs support all of the Focus Areas and are responsible for “Spreading the Word” with all of the topics. They each coordinate the following Focus Areas:

- Self Determination/Self Direction
- Self Advocacy
- Special Olympics & Healthy Living
- Transportation
- ADA/Assistive Technology
- Aging
- Employment
- Housing, CCH, Living Options
- Healthy Relationships
- Public Safety



Self Determination/Self Direction

Varian's Focus Area

- SACs share their stories of promoting Self Determination and Self Direction with advocates and families across the state
- Success Stories are posted on the SAC's "Advocate Corner"
- Presentations provided at conferences, trainings, and 1:1 support to advocates and families
- Teaching, learning, and living by example to hire and manage own staff
 - SACs are role models of living a self determined life and self direct their own staff to support them to live the life they want – 7 out of 10 SACs self direct their supports
 - All developed personal work goals and identified their support needs – to be clear with support staff and be a better boss



TAKE CHARGE OF MY LIFE



Self Advocacy

Kevin's Focus Area



**MY VOICE
MY CHOICE**

SACs support Self Advocacy by:

- Supporting Advocates to learn to advocate for themselves
- Helping advocates to find their voice
- Supporting Advocates to Build their confidence to use their voice to advocate for themselves and others
- Providing resources to advocates across the state
- Promoting Peer 2 Peer to encourage advocates to share their expertise!



Self Advocacy



SPREADING THE WORD

- ❑ “Advocates’ Corner” Website
- ❑ Create and Update Bulletin Boards in DDS offices with FAB topics, Self Advocacy, Self Determination, and Employment information
- ❑ Share FAB Topics with all SA Groups around the state
- ❑ Spreading the word through email and social networks
- ❑ Brown Bag Lunches to share information
- ❑ Sharing with high school students how to speak up and advocate!
- ❑ On Board Training – New DDS Employees and employees who have been out of work for over one year
- ❑ 1:1 Advocacy



Self Advocacy within DDS & Special Olympics and Healthy Living James's Focus Area



□ **Advocacy Fit Club**

- James is the head coach for the Special Olympics Torrington Advocacy Fit Club - earned 25 pins - started a receiving a free boxing class each month at Blue Boy boxing in Thomaston. Club 24 and Thomaston Boxing are both Unified Sports Fitness Destinations.
- The Torrington club received the most active award at the “100,000 Mile Walk” event

Special Olympics State Games

- Special Olympics State Games were held on June 7-9, 2019. SACs supported an advocacy table to spread the word about Self Advocacy. Some of the SACs also competed in the Games.
- The Special Olympics Family Health Forum was held on 10/13/18 and the SACs presented on Healthy Relationship & Everyone’s Rights. We also had a SAC table with informational material. We had 16 in our presentation & 20 sign up for the Special Olympics Family Health Forum.



Transportation

Yana's Focus Area

It was a big year for transportation here in CT!

Here are a few highlights:

GO CT bus pass was released. It's a new stored value bus pass that is similar to the MetroCard in NYC

- SACs have been promoting **GO CT Card** with providers and members of SA groups
- SAC attended opening weekend of the Hartford Rail line and took a free ride on the train
- Transportation Lockbox set up by state to fund transportation projects
- The SACs are awaiting the outcome of a transit study to expand CT FastTrack east of the river which is being done by the State
- SACs have been learning and identifying transportation hurdles that people with disabilities face in CT
- SACs have learned and are promoting how to use ADA paratransit and about Non-Emergency Medical Transportation
- SAC participated in the Multi Modal Transit Summit

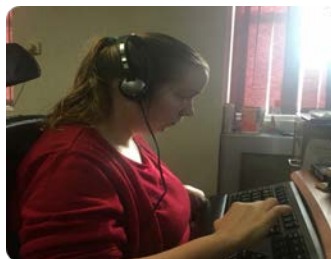


Promoting ADA and Assistive Technology

Kellie's Focus Area



- The SAC's promoted Assistive Technology by promoting the Midstate ACR's lending library. Individuals can get an assessment done by Mid-State ARC and can get equipment on a loan to try out before they purchase it from their budget.
- We also promoted using pictures along with words for everyone to understand the materials no matter what their ability.
- The SAC's promoted the smart house at NEAT market.
- The SAC's also promoted Assistive Technology through success stories.
- They promoted Assistive Technology through the Life Course materials
- The SAC's promoted United Cerebral Palsy's and Assistive Technology.
- The SAC's promoted the use of the ADA voting machines for this year's local elections.



AGING

Carol's Focus Area



Promoting healthy aging and advocating for services as we age across the Life Span

- SAC Board Member of CCADD
- SAC attended the Annual Aging Conference – “Aging Matters” On May 3, 2019 the Annual Aging Conference Presented by: Connecticut Coalition on Aging and Developmental Disabilities, The CT Department of Developmental Services, DORS CT State Unit on Aging, & The CT Chapter of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- “Creating Your Bucket List” was the name of the conference. Over 125 people from around the state participated in bringing the aging and disability community to share information and hear the main speaker, Stefan Deutsch, The Best Is Yet To Come!TM®
- Since 1987 (that’s 31 years!) CCADD has worked to bring the aging and the disability communities together to share knowledge, create opportunities and ideas to support the individuals served, and network to make a difference both on a local and state level.



*My
Bucket
List...*

Employment

Employment for ALL!

Promoting employment goals in IP, increase employment activities and interviews, promote review of benefits with Level Up Counselors.

Employment is Empowerment!

- ❑ SAC on APSE Board – Association of People Supporting Employment First.
- ❑ SAC assisted in planning APSE’s annual conference in CT
- ❑ SACs are members of JDLN -Job Development Leadership Networks
- ❑ SACs attended Job Training Program, Job Fairs, Diversity Employment Fairs, Customized Employment Conference
- ❑ Promote Employment at Transition Fairs, Provider and Staff Meetings
- ❑ Promote Employment in SA groups
- ❑ Brown Bag Lunches in Regional Offices

REAL WORK FOR REAL PAY!



Housing Options

Jeremy's Focus Area



- Being self-determined has a big impact when it comes to living where you want to live!
- SACs provided several presentations to assist advocates thinking about where they want to live and what their options include.
- Some questions to ask - when you're looking for a place to live :
 - Do I want to live alone?
 - Do I want live on the first floor?
 - Do I need accommodations?
 - Do I want to live near my job and my doctors?
 - Do I want to live in the city near a bus line or near the stores or farms?



- Housing options can be very creative and could include:
 - Family home
 - Apartment with a roommate
 - Shared Living
 - CCH
 - Clustered Living
 - Group Home

Healthy Relationships

Jossie's Focus Area



- Promote Healthy Relationship Policy that provides the Right of all individuals of DDS to have and enjoy a Healthy Relationship
- Partner and collaborate with PPSNE to make a difference in CT
- Collaborated with PPSNE and DDS to promote health care supports in the PPSNE Clinics in CT



Healthy Relationships

Jossie's Focus Area



- Ongoing Healthy Relationship Series – Trained over 120 people this year
- 1200 people have participated in the HR Series over the last 9 years
- Three 6 session trainings held in each region
- Peer teaching by SACs with PPSNE Educator
- Presented with PPSNE at the One Voice Conference
- Partnered with PPSNE to develop and train 22 HR Ambassadors



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England



THE
BEST
IS
YET TO
COME

Fiscal Year



- Promote advocates' voices by expanding and developing Self Advocacy Groups
- Promote Living a Self Determined Life
- Continue to promote Healthy Relationships
- Promote various Living Options
- Promote Peer 2 Peer and Employment Opportunities as a Peer 2 Peer qualified provider
- Promote and lead by example the New IP and use of the CT LifeCourse Materials
- Promote and Expand IP Buddy Training to support the New IP
- Promote and Train Degrees of Mean for Providers and advocates
- Continue to provide education and training to Individuals, Families, DDS Staff, Providers, and sister agencies in the department initiatives
- Promote YLF with schools, provide support, training and modeling at the Youth Leadership Forum
- Continue to promote REAL WORK for REAL PAY

*Amazing
Advocates!*



DDS Self Advocate Coordinators

The eyes, ears and voice of DDS

Making a DIFFERENCE!



SPEAK UP and SPEAK OUT!