

Award Recipients

Grassroots Advocate

For her commitment as a grassroots advocate to increase access and independence for Kansans with disabilities.

Awarded To: **DOT NARY**

Peer Mentor

For his long-standing dedication as a mentor and strong advocate for Kansans with disabilities.

Awarded To: **ROGER FRISCHENMEYER**

Community/Business Achievement

For their commitment to ensuring access and independence for Kansans with disabilities.

Awarded To: **MINDS MATTER**

Local/State Government

For their long-standing commitment to the employment of Kansans with disabilities.

Awarded To: **WORKING HEALTHY TEAM**

Youth up to age 19

For being a strong advocate for themselves and other youth with disabilities.

Awarded To: **MAKAYLA HOLLERICH, MALISHA JAKEE, SEAN TYREE**

Youth between ages 20 and 30

For being a strong advocate for himself and other young adults with disabilities.

Awarded To: **AARON ELLISON**

Lifetime Achievement

For his lifetime dedication and commitment to advocating for the independence, integration, and freedom of people with disabilities.

Awarded To: **MIKE OXFORD**

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Kansas Disability Caucus 2018

Executive Summary

2018 Kansas Disability Caucus - Executive Summary

Moving Forward: Turning SETBACKS Into COMEBACKS!

Background and Overview

In August of 2018, almost 200 disability advocates gathered at the Capital Plaza Hotel in Topeka for the 14th Kansas Disability Caucus! People of all ages and from across the state experienced this two-day Caucus that focused on celebrating past achievements and strengthening our resolve as the disability community for the future. The purpose of the Caucus is to develop new disability leadership in Kansas, to educate Kansans with disabilities about the process of policy making and encourage their participation in it, and to determine major issues facing Kansans with disabilities and possible solutions for these issues. The Caucus started in 1988 where about ninety people gathered in Salina. In 1993, the Caucus was moved to Topeka and grew in attendance numbers, and subsequent years have followed. Each Caucus has had its own unique highlights and topics of discussion over the years, ranging from attendant care to employment, from transportation to health insurance. The Caucus is held every two years.

This year, Caucus attendees gathered to speak with a united voice, to develop priority issues and specific solutions, and get educated on important issues. Breakout sessions focused on advocacy, employment, housing, voting, and more. Caucus Regional Sessions allowed for the opportunity to talk about issues in different parts of the state (see overview below). Attendees heard from empowering keynote speakers Kathy Greenlee, Rebecca Cokely, and Mike Oxford. All who were present came away with a new resolve to “turn setbacks into comebacks!”

For more information about the Kansas Disability Caucus, Inc., contact Lou Ann Kibbee, Board President, at louannk@skilonline.com or 785-628-8019.

Caucus Sessions

Kansas disability rights advocates attended West, East, or Central Caucus regional sessions. These attendees included people with all types of disabilities and of all ages, disability rights advocates, and disability service providers. Each region was assigned the task of figuring out what people with disabilities need in order to be fully contributing members of society and move forward in a positive direction. Session attendees also discussed solutions to every issue facing the community. Below are suggested solutions for areas of concern set as priorities during these sessions:

Healthcare/LTSS/Mental Health	-KanCare Issues
- Long Term Care Services & Supports	- Better communication with Care Coordination for coverage
- Olmstead Plan for ongoing LTSS services in KS	- Better benefits
- Address waiting lists/limits on services	
	-KanCare (Medicaid) Expansion
-Protected Income Level/Client Obligation	- Transparency in funding use
- Protected Income Level- Change or eliminate	- Educate voters
	- Local events to raise awareness
-Direct Support Workers	- Join with other interested groups for bigger voice, i.e. hospitals
- Outreach of direct support jobs in communities, for example, workforce centers, post secondary colleges, vo-techs, work study programs	- Reach people with information who do not have internet
- Improved wages and benefits for workers	- Change sound bite story
- Address regulations that could increase workforce availability	
	Community Support & Services
	- Guardianship- alternative
	- Access to healthier foods, increase food stamp eligibility, eliminate food sales tax
	- Flat rate for utilities

Caucus Sessions (continued)

- Fragmented services- simplify access
- Overall cultural capacity- supporting individuals in communities

Housing

- Educate contractors/architects about laws and guideline requirements
- Earmark affordable housing in new housing complexes
- Increase and incentivize accessible housing in rural areas
- Universal design in housing- making tax credits available

Transportation

- Hold companies accountable for complying with standards
- Increase bus routes
- Improve and increase availability of transportation on the waiver services
- Interstate (across state lines) and Intrastate (city to city in state) transportation
- Advocates should attend transit Board meetings
- Support State Plan for Independent Living in locating funding for transportation
- Funding (i.e. taxes, Medicaid) for, and accessibility of, private transit services such as Lyft, Uber, etc.
- Cooperation/collaboration between transportation providers
- Increased operational funds for providers
- Expanded transportation hours, especially nights and weekends
- Consistent service provision by location, for example, school mental health transportation
- Engage communities in local solutions

Outreach

- Utilize media (radio, TV, social networking) in advocacy work
- Share what others have developed to make it work for their communities
- IL Grassroots share information about needed advocacy

Youth with Disabilities

- Mentoring of next generation to carry on necessary advocacy
- Educate the important people in a youth's life about the future and services
- Youth need ADA education
- Youth activities to meet others
- Don't focus completely on the youth's disability

Employment

- Employment education
- More community training for families about employment of people with disabilities

- Increase in tax credit for hiring individuals with disabilities
- More education in schools and with potential employers and communities
- Support individuals with their career paths
- Increase outreach efforts/funding for these efforts
- Creating jobs
- Change attitudes regarding Medicaid as a stepping stone to work
- VR Counsel staffing includes number of counselors, continuity and credentials of counselors
- Use available benefits specialists and other resources
- "Flexibility" in system for long term support, for example, counseling/coach
- New funding source for retaining employment

Education

- Ongoing education for the schools about teaching students with disabilities and requirements
- Invite different disability organizations to schools to help educate kids and teachers
- More education at schools about employment of people with disabilities
- Teachers need to know about individuals with disabilities potential vocational goals
- Parent education of youth's potential future, plus peer system for parents
- More peer programs for youth with disabilities
- Education and incentives for teachers to include all students by following requirements
- Transition Coordinator and Councils- require all school districts to have them
- Implement a model that the youth with the IEP is the lead person
- Life span before school age
- Continue special education gains into adulthood

Civil Rights

- Accessibility issues and enforcement of laws
- Funding community access advisory boards- ADA Enforcement, etc.

FEMA/Disaster Preparedness & Recovery for People with Disabilities

- Push back on FEMA for support for people with disabilities in disasters
- State and local emergency preparedness/awareness and planning
- IL Centers and other provider's role in disaster solutions
- Find more resources- KS Highway Patrol training, other state I/DD counseling information

