

Coalition Formed to Boost Advocacy Efforts | CPD

Sue Reeves

01/11/2013



Three local organizations have joined forces to expand their advocacy efforts on disability issues. Representatives from the Center for Persons with Disabilities (CPD) at Utah State University, OPTIONS for Independence and the Grassroots Advocacy Partnership (GAP) of Utah recently have formed the Northern Utah Coalition on Disabilities (NUCD) to share and maximize each organization's resources. "We all have different roles in advocacy, we all work on policy, but we all associate with different circles," said Jeff Sheen, CPD policy analyst. "We would have a greater impact as a combined voice ... Our core values are in complete alignment." The CPD offers direct services to families with very young children who have disabilities, OPTIONS serves mainly adults with advocacy and independent living skills and GAP helps adults with disabilities and their family members to aid them to participate in making public policy. "We hope by combining under one umbrella as far as a legislative presence, it will have a more significant impact," said Cherrisa Alldredge, GAP coordinator for Region 1, which is comprised of Cache, Rich and Box Elder counties. "All of us have different connections," Sheen said. "We all add different parts to the disability community." "We have some pretty important legislators," Alldredge said. "We might as well take advantage of that and insert the disability message wherever we can." Sheen said the group wants to have more regular contact with local legislators, rather than only when disability issues are being discussed.

"We want to set ourselves up so when you (legislators) need information, when you need facts, you can come to us," Shen said. "We want them to see us as a valuable asset throughout the year." The NUCD will host a "Meet Your Elected Official" event on Thursday, January 17 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Jim Bridger Room at Logan City Library, 255 North Main Street. Legislators from Cache, Rich and Box Elder counties have been invited. *For more information, see the CPD blog on Monday, January 14.*

About the coalition organizationsThe **Center for Persons with Disabilities (CPD)** at Utah State University has worked to improve the lives of people with disabilities and their families through research, direct service and training since 1972. During fiscal year 2012, the CPD provided direct service to more than 4,000 individuals and conducted 4,400 hours of research in genetics, early intervention, health education, assistive technology and other disability-related topics. Nearly 90 projects are operated through the CPD at the local, state, national and international levels. For more information, visit the [web site](#). **OPTIONS for Independence** is a non-profit, non-residential Center for Independent Living (CIL) in northern Utah. The four core services provided by OPTIONS are individual and systems advocacy, information and referral, peer support and independent living skills training. Other programs include outreach to youth, support groups, services to people with vision loss, recreation activities and public education about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For more information, visit the [web site](#). **The Grassroots Advocacy Partnership (GAP) of Utah** is a non-profit organization established to provide education to individuals with disabilities and their families so they can proactively participate in the making of public policy. In addition, GAP is involved in efforts to provide information to legislators and other decision makers on legislative issues of importance within the disability community. For more information, visit the [web site](#).

Paragraph - Nulla facilisi. Vivamus sagittis lectus in [justo congue blandit](#). Sed eget felis eget nulla consectetur congue. Maecenas metus. Fusce ac orci blandit purus facilisis hendrerit. Nullam ut metus quis ipsum convallis euismod. Phasellus turpis purus, pharetra sit amet, dictum eget, ornare eget, ipsum. Morbi pulvinar quam vel sapien. Nulla vitae nisi vitae leo luctus volutpat. Sed faucibus dignissim nunc. Nulla facilisi. Vivamus sagittis lectus in [justo congue blandit](#). Sed eget felis eget nulla consectetur congue. Maecenas metus. Fusce ac orci blandit purus facilisis hendrerit. Nullam ut metus quis ipsum convallis euismod. Phasellus turpis purus, pharetra sit amet, dictum eget, ornare eget, ipsum. Morbi pulvinar quam vel sapien. Nulla vitae nisi vitae leo luctus volutpat. Sed faucibus dignissim nunc.