



Building Awareness & Advocating Change for People with Disabilities

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# ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER 5, 2024

The 2024 election is fast approaching. Election Day is November 5, 2024, so if you have not already voted, now is a good time to ensure that you are registered to vote and preparing for how you are going to vote. To be eligible to vote, you must be a US citizen, lived in Montana for at least 30 days, and be at least 18 years old on election day. Here is a short checklist to help make sure you are able to vote.

Voting is not only a civic duty but also a fundamental right in any democratic society. By registering to vote, you play a crucial role in shaping the future of your community, state, and nation.

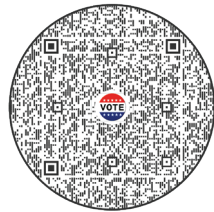
### Confirm your voter registration status:

Check the Montana Voter Information Portal at <https://prodvoterportal.mt.gov/WhereToVote.aspx>, or scan the QR code to the right, to confirm your current voter registration status and ensure that your residential and mailing addresses are correct. If you are an absentee ballot voter, you can also check the status of your absentee ballot on this website.



### Late Voter Registration:

If you are not already registered to vote, Montana is currently in the "late voter registration" phase of the selection so you must go to your County election's office to register to vote. To find out who your County election administrator is and where your election's office is, please go to <http://bit.ly/4feBVPO>, or scan the QR code to the right.



To avoid lines, it is best not to wait until election day to register to vote.

### Know your polling location & hours of operation:

If you are planning to vote at the polls on election day, make sure you know where to go ahead of time by checking the Montana Voter Information Portal. Polls open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. As long as you are in line to vote prior to 8:00 p.m., you will be able to vote.

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## SUMMIT STAFF

### Missoula County

- Executive Director**  
Tami Hoar
- Policy Director**  
Travis Hoffman
- SD-CFC/PAS Program Manager**  
Carrie Dyrud
- SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator**  
Patti Montgomery-Stewart
- SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator**  
Devon Harris
- SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator**  
Andrea Paul
- SD-CFC/PAS Administrative Assistant**  
Jessica Workman
- IL Specialist & Peer Coordinator**  
Tyler Stosich
- Program Support Specialist**  
Theresa Martinosky
- IL & Recreation Specialist**  
Brenden Dalin
- Public Health Outreach Coordinator**  
Mary Willard
- Communications Director**  
Blake de Pastino
- BASE Coordinator**  
John Howard
- Youth Transitions Coordinator**  
Gavin Workman
- Youth IL Specialist**  
Kellan Jean
- BASE Advisor**  
Michael Beers
- Administrative Assistant**  
Laurie Swanson
- Financial Officer**  
Scott Fels
- Accounting Assistant**  
Kellie Morrison

### Flathead County

- County Coordinator**  
Dianna Kintzler
- Program Support Specialist**  
Katie Newman
- SD-CFC/PAS Specialist**  
Aleyna Raymond

### Ravalli County

- Deputy Director**  
Alan Fugleberg
- Independent Living Specialist**  
Alice Mainwaring
- Peer Support Specialist**  
Roxanne Fisher
- Program Support Specialist**  
Alyssa Rockwell

### Lake & Sanders County

- Deputy Director**  
Alan Fugleberg
- Independent Living Specialist**  
Susan Morris
- Independent Living Specialist**  
Carol Madden
- Program Support Specialist**  
Tammie Miller

# New Summit Staff

## Andrea Paul SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator - Missoula



I am a lifelong resident of the Flathead Indian Reservation. My family is Bitterroot Salish and Pend d'Oreille. Together, my husband and I have a blended family of eleven unique children. We have been tribal foster parents off and on for eight years and enjoy helping others. We focus on cultural tradition, and we like to spend our time passing those traditions onto our children. Mountain trips, wood cutting, fishing, and berry picking are a few of our favorites.

I have slowly been pursuing my educational dreams in Psychology, General Anthropology, and Human Services. I hope to complete both of my degrees one day soon! I am a strong advocate for disability rights and the support of others. The last few years my work experience has primarily focused on administrative work, but I look forward to expanding on the advocacy and supportive part in my new role at Summit!

A couple of fun things about myself; I am an avid reader, and I do not watch television (which my kids think is weird!) I have a strong interest in trauma healing, and I moderate a healing group on several social media platforms. Paranormal activity is an interest of mine, and I am a self-described nerd.

I enjoy meeting new people, and I am looking forward to working with everyone at Summit!

## Katie Newman Program Support Specialist - Kalispell



Hi, my name is Katie Newman. I was born and raised in the Flathead Valley. I have two boys ages 5 and 7 that always keep me on my toes. Our hobbies are horses, rodeo, playing sports, camping and just being together as a family.

I was involved in a horse accident on May 31, 2022, where I broke my C5 vertebrae. I was instantly paralyzed from my shoulders down. Doctors told my parents and I from the beginning that I would spend the rest of my life confined to a wheelchair and that things like standing, walking, and living independently was going to be a thing of the past.

In my world, that's not an option, we don't just give up. I'm working and pushing myself every day to be stronger. I'm now able to stand by myself and currently learning how to walk again.



## Polson Office Update

Summit's new branch office serving Lake and Sanders counties opened in July at #3 9th Avenue West in Polson. We held a grand opening that was well-attended in August. The Polson office has seen an increase in activities. Stephani Ho, Pre-ETS Counselor from Vocational Rehabilitation, and Carol Madden, IL Specialist offered a Job Club for high school aged youth through August.

Carol also offered a Community Living Skills workshop, and the Polson office hosted a well-attended IEP Bootcamp in September. We welcomed a new peer advocate, Olivia Gordier. Long-time peer advocate Tammie Miller was promoted to Program Support Specialist in August.

Carol Madden, Independent Living Specialist offered a Living Well in the Community class for consumers in Lake County. She also finished teaching weekly Building Advocacy and Learning Leadership Skills (BALLS) classes at the high schools in Polson and Thompson Falls. Carol completed the Community Living Skills Facilitator Course and will be offering the class from the new Polson office.

If you have any questions about our classes and workshops, please call 406-215-1604.

## Kalispell Office Update

Hello from Kalispell!

We hope you enjoyed your Summer! We have some exciting things happening this fall!

Our YODA group will be back to our usual schedule of meeting on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at the office in Kalispell from 4-6 p.m. We will continue to promote team building with group activities that focus on collaboration, advocacy, and, of course, fun! Upcoming meetings are October 22nd, November 12th, and November 26th.

Third Thursday Crafternoon! Our arts and crafts group continues to meet each month on the third Thursday from 2-4 p.m. Participants can try a provided project or work on something of their own. Abilities of all kinds are welcome to join the fun! Upcoming meetings are October 17th, November 21st, and December 19th. Please join us!

Kalispell is currently looking for positive role models in the disability community to become part of the Kalispell peer advocates group and taking applications for a full-time independent living specialist.

For more information about classes or employment please contact Dianna at 406-257-0048 ext. 3 or go to [www.summitilc.org/about/employment](http://www.summitilc.org/about/employment).

## Hamilton Office Update

The Ravalli County office in Hamilton continues to be busy. Alyssa Rockwell, peer advocate, was promoted to Program Support Specialist. She will be assisting with youth and other activities at the Hamilton office and in local schools and working toward increasing participation in other activities at The Refuge. Activities include: Thank Goodness It's Art Friday, Aktion Club (People First) and Art Expressions, and the new Book Club.

Roxanne Fisher is now Peer Support Specialist, a position formerly held by Mary Millin who retired in June. Mary returned in August to serve as a peer advocate for the Ravalli County office.

In September, Deputy Director Alan Fugleberg, and Policy Director Travis Hoffman met with leadership at the Rocky Mountain Grange in Hamilton to explore opportunities to improve accessibility at the Grange building.

**For more information about our classes and workshops please call 406-363-5242.**

# Celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month: A Step Toward Inclusivity

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), observed each October, serves as a vital reminder of the contributions and achievements of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. This month-long celebration is not just about recognition; it underscores the importance of inclusivity and equality in employment practices. Here are several reasons why celebrating NDEAM is essential.

## 1. Raising Awareness

NDEAM plays a crucial role in raising awareness about the barriers that individuals with disabilities face in the job market. Despite advancements in accessibility and inclusion, many people with disabilities still encounter prejudice, misconceptions, and systemic obstacles. By highlighting these issues, NDEAM encourages society to confront and address the stereotypes that hinder employment opportunities.

## 2. Promoting Inclusivity

Celebrating NDEAM fosters an inclusive workplace culture. When employers recognize and value the unique skills and perspectives that individuals with disabilities bring, it creates an environment that benefits everyone. Diverse teams are often more innovative and effective, leading to better problem-solving and creativity. NDEAM promotes the idea that diverse abilities should be embraced, not sidelined.

## 3. Showcasing Success Stories

Highlighting the achievements of individuals with disabilities during NDEAM helps to inspire others. Sharing success stories can motivate employers to consider hiring individuals with diverse backgrounds and abilities. These narratives demonstrate that with the right support and accommodations, people with disabilities can excel in their careers, contributing significantly to their organizations and communities.

## 4. Encouraging Policy Change

NDEAM serves as a platform for advocating for policies that promote equitable employment practices. By bringing attention to the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities, stakeholders can push for legislative changes that enhance workplace accessibility and protections. This advocacy is essential for ensuring that all individuals have equal opportunities to thrive in their careers.

## 5. Building Community and Support

Celebrating NDEAM fosters a sense of community among individuals with disabilities, employers, and advocates. Events and activities during this month provide opportunities for networking, collaboration, and sharing resources. This community-building is crucial for empowering individuals with disabilities to pursue their career goals and for employers to create supportive work environment.

## 6. Commitment to Ongoing Change

Finally, NDEAM serves as a reminder that the work toward employment equality is ongoing. Celebrating this month encourages organizations and individuals to commit to continuous improvement in their practices. It challenges us all to remain vigilant in our efforts to create inclusive workplaces that welcome diverse abilities and perspectives.

In conclusion, National Disability Employment Awareness Month is more than just a celebration; it is a call to action. By raising awareness, promoting inclusivity, showcasing success stories, advocating for policy changes, building community, and committing to ongoing improvement, NDEAM plays a vital role in shaping a more equitable workforce. Embracing diversity in all its forms not only benefits individuals with disabilities but enriches our entire society. Celebrating NDEAM is a step toward a future where everyone has the opportunity to contribute their talents and skills.

# ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER 5, 2024

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### Accessible voting:

Individuals with disabilities, regardless of how they receive a ballot, may take their ballot to their local county election office, or select drop locations, to use an accessible voting machine to mark a ballot independently or utilize other options. All county election offices in Montana have either an AutoMARK or ExpressVote accessible voting machine, depending which county, that provide the same accessibility options. Both machines provide multiple accessibility features, including: touch-screen voting for those who cannot write, alternative switch or touch-screen voting for those with limited dexterity, sip & puff voting for those without hand or arm function, and blind/low vision options of screen contrast changes and/or text to speech audio voting via headphones. Election officials are also available to provide physical and/or instructional assistance as needed or requested.

### Become acquainted with the issues and candidates on the ballot:

You can view your sample ballot on the Montana Voter Information Portal in order to familiarize yourself with the ballot layout and selections. You should have also received a 2024 Montana Voter Information Pamphlet in the mail. If you did not receive one in the mail, you can view it online at <https://sosmt.gov/elections/vip/>, or by scanning the QR code to the right, in PDF, braille, or audio versions.



Some of the candidates that you will be asked to vote on during the November 5 election also answered disability related questions in a Disability Rights Montana candidate survey. If you would like to look up how your candidate may have answered questions pertaining to disability, you can find those on the Disability Rights Montana website at <https://disabilityrightsmt.org/candidate-responses-2024/>, or by scanning the QR code to the right.



**By knowing how the voting process works, participating in your civil right, and taking advantage of available options, we hope your voting experience will be as fulfilling and liberating as possible.**



### SUMMIT BOARD

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Molly Blair      | Kelly Sellars  |
| Sherene Ricci    | Tom Seekins    |
| Gabrielle Broere | Randy Blevins  |
| Peter Drakos     | Jodine Tarbert |



# DISABILITY ROOTS

*Huge thanks to everyone who showed up for our biggest event of the year, "Disability Roots," in Missoula on September 18!*

*A packed house with folks who were eager to view the photographs of Tom Olin, the documentary photographer who has been chronicling the Disability Rights Movement for 40 years. We had the privilege of hearing Tom, Marsha Katz, and Stephanie Thomas share their stories from the front lines of the movement, reminding us how their direct action and resistance has shaped the world we live in today, and providing a unique perspective on the independent living movement's place in civil rights history.*

*The panel members were described as "Disability Royalty," and we were honored to have an audience with them.*





# BASE SCHEDULE

725 West Alder, #4 Missoula, MT

For the following activities, please call BASE for details:

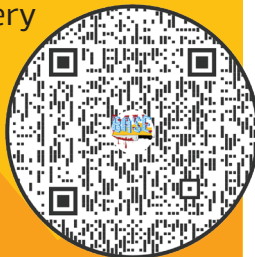
- All Abilities Yoga
- Game Night
- Art Group
- Filmmaking
- Improv Workshop
- BOLD Gayme Night
- Dance/Movement Class

**Update:**At the end of August the BASE community debuted 13 new films at the the Camp Horror Film Festival. The films were met with much excitement and the work showed the progression of the BASE film crew. The films will be shown on the BASE Film Extravaganza (see QR code below) YouTube channel every Thursday at 5:15 PM.

Several workshops are returning to BASE this fall.

All abilities movement with stage combat returns every Tuesday at 5:00 PM.

All abilities Yoga on zoom returns at the new time of 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM every Monday.



**For BASE Schedule Updates and Additional Events go to:**

[www.summitilc.org/calendar](http://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](mailto:jhoward@summitilc.org).

**Contact BASE:**

[www.basemissoula.org](http://www.basemissoula.org)

Phone: 406-215-1080

## CLASSIFIED ADS

### Jazzy Pride Wheelchair

\$1000 obo, 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](mailto:tamera144@gmail.com) or 406-363-4898

### Smart Talker text scanner

Slightly used, \$700. Contact Larry at 406-  
633-4036 or [ketch1969@gmail.com](mailto:ketch1969@gmail.com)

**Nova Walker, Quontum 600 power wheelchair, Commode, 2 Transfer Benches, Beezy Manual Wheelchair.** Call Gary (406) 224-5527 or [garylee032051@gmail.com](mailto:garylee032051@gmail.com)

To get listed contact Tyler Stosich at (406) 728-1630 or email [tstosich@summitilc.org](mailto:tstosich@summitilc.org).

Or, list and find items on the MonTECH exchange: <http://montech.ruralinstitute.umd.edu/mtdb/>

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# TIS' THE SEASON



Fall is a busy time of year. School is in full force, and the holidays are on the horizon. It's also when new flu, COVID-19, and other seasonal vaccines become available. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) generally recommend everyone ages 6 months and above get both the influenza and the updated COVID-19 vaccine.

Vaccines are one of the most life-saving medical interventions ever created and regular vaccination is one of the most important ways to protect yourself against respiratory diseases, including COVID, flu and RSV.

The CDC recommends that you should get your flu shot as long as influenza viruses are circulating; however, September and October are the best times for most people to get vaccinated. This timing allows us to develop the highest immunity before peak virus seasons and holiday gatherings. It is important to remember that it takes about two weeks for the full protection of the flu vaccine to kick in.

There is no ideal time frame to get the new COVID-19 vaccine. You can even double up on the influenza and COVID-19 vaccines on the same day. This means you can choose to get vaccinated any time unless you recently had COVID-19 or were recently vaccinated with a prior COVID-19 vaccine. If you recently had COVID-19, you may wait up to three months before getting your new vaccine.

Flu, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) cause most hospitalizations due to respiratory illness during fall and winter. With fall arriving, it's time to plan to get your recommended vaccines. Staying up to date with vaccines against flu and COVID-19 (and RSV immunization, if recommended for you) protects you from severe disease, hospitalization, and death.

To learn more about these and other vaccines, talk with your healthcare provider or contact your local health department. To find a health department near you, please go to <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/EHFS/countytribalhealthdepts>.

## 2025 SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES

### Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA):

Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) from the third quarter of 2023 through the third quarter of 2024, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries will receive a 2.5 percent COLA for 2025.

### Social Security Disability Thresholds

#### Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA):

	2024	2025
Non-Blind	\$1,550/mo.	\$1,620/mo.
Blind	\$2,590/mo.	\$2,700/mo.

#### Trial Work Period (TWP)

#### SSI Federal Payment Standard:

	2024	2025
Individual	\$ 1110/mo.	\$ 1160/mo.
Couple	\$ 943/mo.	\$ 967/mo.
	\$1,415/mo.	\$1,450/mo.

#### SSI Resource Limits:

Individual	\$2,000	\$2,000
Couple	\$3,000	\$3,000



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