

Green Mountain Self-Advocates Board Meeting

3/28/16 - 9:30am to 12:30pm



Our Lady of Angels Church, Randolph, VT



Officers (2): Randy Lizotte, Lori Jones.

Board Members (10): Linda Monette, Thesha Thibodeau, Jennifer McMahon, Lisa Smedy, Thomas Caswell, Kaiya Andrews, Patti Grassette, Conor Cleveland, Beverly Williams, Erik Johnson.

Self-Advocates (16): Jeremy Chaim, Lorna Merrill, Cy Trombley, Kris Medina, Levi Gardner, Josh Dumias, Hilary Christian, Lehanna Guyette, Erica Rocheleau, Adam Motziertz, Marc Preman, Robert Martin II, Daisy Emerson, Delsie Polgar, Samantha Parizo, Vicki Upham, Doreen Mason.

Allies (12): Paul Tidyman, Paula Collins, Danielle Cote, Mary Ruffing, Amethyst Crow, Colin Provencher, Paul Appleby, Carl Comstock, Amy Anderson, Linda Belval, Melanie Bangora, Brittany McAdams, Tracy Robar, Pam Allen.

GMSA Staff (2): Karen Topper, Max Barrows.



Local Group Updates:



Vermont Choices: Did a magazine fundraiser



CAT: Doing a how to speak up for themselves training. Kaiya shared her experience at a youth summit last week. She explained the concept of career access to everybody.

SAVY: They are fundraising for their group



GATSA: Sold bulbs, they also sold high mowing seats. Planning a spring dance.



Friends Helping Friends: The group is now talking about fundraisers and they had their officer elections.

Bridging Advocates: No update



Advocates For Action: They are in the process of electing officers.



Next Step, Self-Advocates: Going to state house on 4/1 and they are doing a voter training in April.



Communication Alliance: Presented to Peoples Academy (local high school) about their lives with disabilities. They are looking for more schools to present in. They went around and everyone said if they had contact with their legislators and how it went.



Hot Seat Activity

Erik Johnson was chosen to be the participant in the Hot Seat Activity.

Questions that were asked:



1. When was the last time you talked to Jane Kitchel? Erik answered that he saw her at the state house a couple of years ago and he talked to her then.
2. How long have you been in self-advocacy? Erik answered he was in self-advocacy for 5 years
3. Has he written to Jane Kitchel or any other senators? Erik answered that he has not.
4. If Hollywood made a movie about you, what movie would it be and what actor would be playing him? Erik answered; Robin Williams
5. What is your favorite food? Erik answered; Pizza and Pasta.
6. I want to know why is self-advocacy important to you? Erik answered; so I can speak up for myself and talk to people.
7. What is your favorite music, songs, artists? Erik answered; my favorite group would be John Denver.
8. Is there any personal goal that self-advocacy is helping you with? Erik answered; speaking up for myself.
9. How has self-advocacy changed your life? Erik answered; to help me speak up for things I need to do.
10. What was the weirdest food you've ever eaten? Erik answered; not many.
11. Where would you travel if money a problem? Erik answered; I would travel with my family. I would go see the game show "the price is right."
12. How many years have you lived in Danville? Erik answered; Close to 18 years.
13. If you would meet up with an actor for lunch, who would it be? Erik answered; Robin Williams.
14. What is your favorite season of the year? Erik answered; Spring or summer because I like doing the summer games
15. What is your favorite holiday? Erik answered; Christmas.



16. What sport do you play for Special Olympics? Erik answered; Bacci and Bowling.



Supported Decision Making Conference

Randy explained what supported decision making was and asked the board to consider voting to pay the registration fees for board members to attend. This conference is on June 9th from 8:30am to 3pm. This is being organized by the agencies and the state. It is about supporting people to make their own decisions. The board voted on this and it was decided to pass the motion of paying registration fees for board members to attend.



Voices and Choices

Randy asked if anyone had any questions about the voices and choices conference.

It was asked what kind of workshops will be in the conference?

- Think work sharing self advocacy stories at local schools.
- A theatre workshop which will have theatre role plays that are focused on employment.
- One about going to college.
- Another about healthy living.
- Having kids in your life
- A self advocate from Boston will be coming and they will be doing two different workshops.
- Internet Safety with a focus on building a positive reputation online.
- Soft Skills and problem solving
- Able act benefits
- How to be your own guardian
- I'm employed what's next?

- A man from Syracuse will be coming and doing a workshop
- No Drama
- Dress for success
- Using your ipad in everyday life to be organized for work.
- Self advocacy on the job
- Recognizing and dealing with job discrimination
- Progressive Employment

Ally of the year

DS Directors have been strong allies this year. They continue to be in touch with GMSA and we did the DSP day together. They have done peer mentoring, Supported V and C, DSP day.

Vermont Center for independent living is another strong ally. They have given money, 1000 dollar sponsor for V and C and sponsored the GALA. They check in with GMSA when we are in meetings with them. They always invite us to their events.



The DD council has been a very strong ally as well. They worked with GMSA to apply for a healthcare grant (\$68,000). They worked with GMSA to do another healthcare grant (\$65,000). They also worked hard around the able act.

They broke into their local groups to talk about the ally of the year to help come to a decision about who to give the award to. There was overwhelming support to award it to the DD Council.

Voices and choices planning call



There will be a planning call regarding voices and choices. It will be Tuesday April 5th 10 to 11:30am. You can come to the GMSA office or call

1866-210-1669: Code 1052014#

Employment Idol



Randy asked the board to think about what the best way would be to decide who gets picked to employment idol. They decided to have the officers to get together and select the top candidates for employment idol.

Legislative Update



They broke into small groups to talk come up with a 30 second speech about what they will tell their legislators about the COLA increase that the agencies need and why it is important. Once they came back together Max played as a senator and each group pitched their case to him. Here are the answers from the small groups:

- Staff help people live on their own and not with their parents
- Staff help people work
- If they do not get COLA, they may leave
- I get used to one person, then they leave
- It is just my feeling that everyone deserves fair pay
- Increase in COLA helps us keep the same staff and more for transportation
- I know staff that love their job, love the people they work with. They do not want to work somewhere else but need more \$ to line on.
- Sometimes when staff leave to find new jobs, we lose services
- It affects us because they can't get to work so I am at risk of losing my job.

Will and Johanna from Human Rights Council



There were two guest speakers, Will and Johanna from the human rights council. Will is from the workers center. They are working on putting together the people's convention.