Voices and Choices Conference

May 9–10, 2016
Burlington, Vermont
Green Mountain Self-Advocates
18th Annual Self-Advocacy Conference
If you use a wheelchair and are going to Workshops #8, #9, #10 or #11. Take Elevator A to Floor 1. Next go down the hall past the restaurant, then take Elevator B to Floor G (see on map below)

Walk Down a Few Stairs. Get to Workshops #8, #9, #10 or #11

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This year’s keynote speaker comes from deep within Red Sox Country! Ashley Wolfe is a research liaison at the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at University of Massachusetts in Boston. Starting in her youth and throughout college, Ashley has been a strong self-advocate leader. Her advocacy work has led her from the big screen to college campuses and beyond. She is here in Vermont to share her story about getting her dream job and her journey along the way!

As someone with Down Syndrome, Ashley is an advocate for herself and for other people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Her research at the Institute for Community Inclusion is about ways people with IDD succeed at school, at work, and in their communities. Since joining the Institute Community Inclusion in 2008, she has gained extensive experience talking to people about writing about their stories. Ashley writes about her research findings for peer-reviewed journals, makes materials for individuals IDD, their families, and for job developers that are clear and easy to understand. She also analyzes data and helps decide on the best way to share it with different audiences. She has presented research findings at conferences and mentored self-advocates in Florida. She gets support from a job developer and a professional mentor, as well as from her supervisors.

Ashley has also worked at Boston University as a peer mentor and as a professional consultant for young adults with intellectual disabilities on a youth panel.

Ashley was awarded the first-ever Research in Action award by The Arc in 2011. In 2014, she received the Disability Law Center’s Individual Leadership Award.
Register for Voices & Choices in Conference Center 3:00 - 6:00 pm

Pick up Hotel Room Keys at Hotel Front Desk 3:00 - 6:00 pm

Art Workshops in Exhibition Hall 4:00 - 6:00 pm

- Painting as a Teamwork Tool
- Fairies and Demons Drawing Workshop

Learn Dance Moves Be in a Flash Mob in Diamond Ballroom
4:00 - 5:00 pm or 5:00 - 6:00 pm

in Amphitheater 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Talent Show in Amphitheater 5:00 - 6:00 pm

Dinner in Emerald Ballroom
★ Theresa Wood Citizenship Award 6:30 pm

Dance in Emerald Ballroom 8:00 - 11:00 pm

Schedule for Monday ~ May 9
Winners share a prize dinner date at Monday’s conference banquet.

Grab Your 3 Minutes of Fame!

FLASH MOB
4:00 to 6:00
Diamond Ballroom

Always wanted to be part of a flash mob? Do you have two left feet but love to dance anyways? Come learn easy dance moves so you can be in the Flash Mob on Tuesday at lunch!

PAINTING Workshop
Exhibition Hall

Suki is an amazing artist
4:00 to 6:00
Join Us Anytime!

Putting Your Personal Fairies and Demons to Work

Working has its ups and downs. One minute you love your job and then it gets real tough! Come take an art class with Emily! Have fun and learn an easy way to draw fairies and demons. Use art to share what’s difficult as well as what is totally fantastic on the job. No drawing experience needed.

WINNERS SHARE A PRIZE DINNER DATE AT MONDAY’S CONFERENCE BANQUET.
Speaking Tuesday Morning!

Shae Martin
Works as a LPN
VT Technical College

Greg Haskins
Works 2 jobs!

Kelly Donahue
Works as a LPN

Hilary Clark
Has 4 jobs! One as a Racing Coach
Breakfast for Hotel Guests in Exhibition Hall 7:00 - 8:00 am

Register for Voices & Choices in Conference Center 8:30 - 9:30 am

Morning Workshops 10:45 - 12:00 am

Lunch in Exhibition Hall 12:00 - 12:30 pm

☆ GMSA 2015 Slide Show 12:30 pm
☆ Ally of the Year Award To
☆ Local Group Annual Awards To

FLASH MOB I'm Alive 1:30 pm

Afternoon Workshops 1:45 - 3:00 pm

Get Home Safe...Thanks for Coming! 3:00 pm
Indigo One

Diamond One

1

Dig’Em Treats – My Steps to Success
Come hear about my transition from high school to owning a business and loving what I do. How self-determination, creative minds and hard work will lead you down a path to success!

Hope Peterson, Emily Coffrin and Michele Paya

2

Living a Healthy and Balanced Life
We want to share with you how to take care of your body, mind, spirit, and relationships. We’ll talk about healthy eating, getting exercise, meditation, mindfulness practices, and how advocating for these things will empower you and your relationships. You’ll get to see firsthand how fun and rewarding it is to dance, meditate, and enjoy a healthy snack. You will receive a handout that will give simple guidelines on how to live a healthy lifestyle that include balanced meal plans, easy exercise suggestions, meditation guides, and mindfulness practices.

Marjorie Burns, Danielle Viau and Evan Cross

3

Theater Games: Let’s Get to Work
Through theater games and role-plays we’ll act, laugh and learn our way through the process of getting and keeping a job that brings joy and money into your life. No theater experience necessary for us all to shine.

Emily Anderson, Thomas Caswell and Sarah DeBouter

4

An Amazon Card for your Thoughts about Work
Come to a focus group about work! A focus group is when a group of people come together to answer questions, tell their stories, and share ideas and experiences.

Join our focus group to talk about:
☆ How people help you get a job.
☆ What you think about employment.

Jon Kramer and Allison Hall

5

Stepping Up: Preparing for the Real World with the College Steps Program
Current and former students of the College Steps program at Johnson State College will share about their college experiences! This workshop will use videos, skits, discussions, and slide presentations to show how the College Steps Program helps to advance students’ social, academic, and employment skills.

Tiffany Martinez, Tara Audet, Raymond Gordon, Josh Davis, Matthew Alden Chris Kennedy

Amphitheater

Diamond Two

Emerald One

Cartleton

Limit 15 people
### No Drama

The Self-Advocates of the Adirondacks are coming across Lake Champlain to present their No Drama Campaign about staff keeping our private info private! These New Yorkers used this training to speak up at agency orientations and conferences, to name a few places. You will learn what the campaign is, what to say when an issue comes up, and other projects that the Self-Advocates of the Adirondacks are working on.

*Jasmine Olson, Jeff Ross, Tonya Norton and Jasmine Olson*

### Think Work: Sharing Stories about Self-Advocacy, Communication, and Inclusion at Local Schools

Four Self-Advocates, who are members of the Washington County Communication Alliance, will share about the work they have done with GMSA as part of a Learning Collaborative. They will share their stories through power points, show video clips, and will have activities for participants.

*Tracy Thresher, Scott Brodie, Kris Medina & Conor Cleveland*

### Babies, Toddlers and Teens! Oh My!

What are we to do when we find them in our lives? Whether you’re a parent, an uncle or aunt, a family friend or a neighbor, come learn some skills for being around babies and children.

*Kaiya Andrews, Hillary Christian and Bobby Deforge*

### Making Cents of the System: How Work Affects Your Benefits

Come learn how about work affects your Social Security benefits. Learn the ins and outs of navigating Social Security and Medicaid.

*Nicole LeBlanc and Jackie Dzewaltowski*

### Ability Awareness Training

Participants will be more aware of what people with disabilities can do and what they are like.

*Christina Kelly, Tammy Lethridge, Lisa Martel,*
Soft Skills – Keys to Your Success
In the world of work, people skills are called soft skills. Using skills like being on time, networking, teamwork, and being dependable can unlock success in the workplace. Come learn some of these important skills to help you find or keep a job.

Stirling Peebles, Nicole LeBlanc and Karen Noone

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Tuesday Afternoon Workshops

1. Getting Your Foot in the Door: A Stress-free Exploration of the Workforce
   Have you ever wondered how to find the job that works for you? Come learn about “Progressive Employment,” a way to find out what kinds of jobs speak to you in a low-stress atmosphere. Progressive Employment lets people try out different careers based on their interests and introduces people with disabilities to their business communities. Get your foot in the door and on your way to career exploring!
   Hugh Bradshaw

2. I Want a Job! Where Do I Start?
   This workshop is about people with disabilities working in the community. We will talk about what we have done with self-advocates in Florida, including making videos and other tools that teach people about planning for work. Then, we will work in small groups and use tools that will help you to plan your dream career!
   Ashley Wolfe, Allison Hall, Jon Kramer and Max Barrows

3. Theater Games: Let’s Get to Work
   Through theater games and role-plays we’ll act, laugh and learn our way through the process of getting and keeping a job that brings joy and money into your life. No theater experience necessary for us all to shine.
   Emily Anderson, Thomas Caswell and Sarah DeBouter

4. Using iPad Technology for Employment in the 21st Century
   Participants will learn about the different ways that iPads and smartphones can be used to support a person in the workplace. We will demonstrate examples of apps that can help people increase their communication with co-workers, manage daily schedules and work tasks, and increase their independence on the job. Presenters will share their on-the-job experiences with using iPads.
   Pascal Cheng, Lauren Barnett and George Ricker

5. Soft Skills – Keys to Your Success
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   Stirling Peebles, Nicole LeBlanc and Karen Noone
So I have a Job…Now What?
Step one is getting a job. But what comes after that? This isn’t something people talk about enough! We will talk about what it is like after you have had a job for a while. We will have a panel discussion about what it’s like to have a job and what issues come up. Practice speaking up for yourself in some role plays. We will also talk about myths and facts about the Americans with Disabilities Act!

Randy Lizotte, Jennifer McMahon, James Williams & Josh Hayes

Creative Role Models: Arts and Mentoring for Youth and Adults with Disabilities
VSA VT offers an arts based mentoring program by and for people with disabilities. Attendees will learn about how arts and relationships work together and about how mentoring can support youth with disabilities graduating high school. We’ll try a few art activities and practice some mentoring skills.

Nicole Villemaire & Toby MacNutt

Knock their Socks Off!
How to Make a Great First Impression!
Did you know you only have 7 seconds to make a first impression? Come learn how to make it great! We’ll be talking about first impressions face to face AND online! We will talk about tips for social media, have a fashion show, and practice with role plays. By the end of the workshop you will know how to knock their socks off!

Hilary Clark, Ashley Bly, David Frye, Rosie and Josh Dumais

Being Your Own Guardianship
Come learn how to be your own guardian. We will share lessons that you can learn from our stories!

Barbie Hodgdon, Samantha Parizo and Kathy Hodgdon

My Life in Institutions and My Way Out: Telling Our Stories, Journey of Change
Michael Kennedy is a self-advocate from Syracuse, NY. Michael will talk about his life journey to advocacy and how important it is to share about the journeys of change in our lives. People who come to the workshop will be invited to share their own stories of change – that they have taken or would like to take. We can share about what is helpful on our journey and what is not.

Mike Kennedy and Pam Walker

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Thanks to Our Super Advocate Sponsor

A heart-felt thank you from GMSA to the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council for sponsoring our conference and for funding conference scholarships!
VCIL’s mission is to empower Vermonters with disabilities, Deaf Vermonters, and others to tear down the physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers that keep us from realizing our full human potential.
Thanks to Our Super Advocate Sponsor

A heart-felt thank you from GMSA to the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Services Division for sponsoring our conference and for funding conference scholarships!
Thank you to Herman Goldberg for your generosity and leadership to the self-advocacy movement in Vermont!!!

We are so grateful to have leaders like you!

Herman Goldberg
Past President of GMSA
Thanks to Our Silver Sponsors

CDCI envisions a future where all people, including people who experience developmental and other disabilities, are fully included in their home, schools, and communities. We envision a future in which supports and services are available across the span of life, leading to interdependence, self-determination, and inclusion.

An enormous thank you for the donation made in honor of “Gladys,” a gift that was used to support self-advocate scholarships for the 2016 Conference so that self-advocacy can grow in others!
Thank you,

Green Mountain Self-Advocates,
for your commitment to helping individuals with developmental disabilities live more fulfilling lives.

We are grateful for the work you do to educate and raise awareness about the strengths, rights, wants and needs of people with developmental disabilities.

www.howardcenter.org
The GMSA Ally of the Year is
The Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council

The 2016 Ally of the Year Award will be presented to the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council for their outstanding support of Green Mountain Self-Advocates and our mission for Vermonters with developmental disabilities to educate peers to take control over their own lives, make decisions, solve problems, and speak for themselves. From their tireless support to their partnership on many of the projects that Green Mountain Self Advocates has worked on over the years, we thank them for the great work they do! Their collaboration on projects such as the Inclusive Healthcare Partnership Project and the SIM Healthcare Training Project demonstrates their commitment to improving the lives of Vermonters with disabilities and to creating and supporting positions of leadership for Self-Advocates. These projects are utterly vital to improving the quality of life and services we seek for all Vermonters and we are extremely grateful for their support and want to celebrate all that the DD Council brings into our communities.

Thank you and congratulations!
Thanks to our Friends of GMSA

Voices and Choices Conference
A Tribute to 2016 Award Winners

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**James Higginson**
Ally: **Deborah Turner**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Danielle Viau**
Ally: **Marilyn Shank**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Lisa Martell**
Ally: **Wayne Snow**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Erik Johnson**
Ally: **Mary Ellen Sudol**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Samantha Parizo**
Ally: **Dianne Lawson**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Erik Johnson**
Ally: **Mike Entriken**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Marilyn Shank**
Ally: **Mary Ellen Sudol**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
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Ally: **Dianne Lawson**

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**Erik Johnson**
Ally: **Mike Entriken**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Vicki Upham**
Ally: **Mark Schroeter**

Self-Advocate of the Year:
**Danielle Viau**
Ally: **Mark Schroeter**

Ally of the Year:
**PAT Warner**

Ally of the Year:
**Lisa Thompson**

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A Tribute to 2016 Award Winners

**COPS**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Nyoka Cushman  
Ally: Lucy Stone

**Capitol Advocates**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Shae Martin  
Ally: Brett Seymour

**Rockin' Advocates of Central Vermont**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Dan Davis  
Ally: Judy Bickford

**NEXT STEP**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Jennifer McMahon  
Ally: Amy Anderson

**Windsor Self-Advocates**
Self-Advocate of the Year: James Paradis  
Ally: Mary Ruffing

**Communication Alliance**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Kyle Moriarty  
Ally: Rachel Johnson

**Advocates For Action**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Lindsey Finch  
Ally: Heather Fullam

**Presume Competence!**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Ken DeFoe  
Ally: Emily Anderson

**Bridging Advocates Together**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Thomas Caswell  
Ally: Bythe Leonard

**LGBTI Support Groups**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Kelly Chabot  
Ally: Kim Fountain
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Join A Local Group!

- Next Steps Self-Advocates
- GATSA: Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy
- SAVY: Strong Advocacy Voices & You
- Vermont Choices
- Champlain Voices
- Burlington Self-Advocacy Club
- Capital Advocates Together
- Rockin’ Advocates of Central Vermont
- Bridging Advocates Together
- Communication Alliance
- Friends Helping Friends
- Speak Up Addison County
- Randolph Area Peer Support
- Connections of Peer Support
- Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered of Rutland
- Windsor Self-Advocates
- Dream Catchers
- Advocates for Action
- Bennington Peer Support
- Wild Hope Advocacy Group

Call Max
1-800-564-9990
Max can tell you how to connect with a self-advocacy group near you
Bluebird Fairies make people smile, feel good and develop confidence to create positive changes in their lives.

Bluebird Fairies, owned and operated by creative artist-inspirationalist Emily Anderson, offers products and resources to help others searching for tools to guide them through life’s challenges. www.bluebirdfairies.com

Emily Anderson created these work fairies for the 2016 Voices and Choices Conference. The theme is Think Work!

Emily serves individuals who are seeking to find greater meaning in their lives such as: their life purpose, positive support for feeling OK on a daily basis, and interested in self-improvement; as well as, assisting companies interested in promoting positive communication and creativity among their staff and organization.