

# RAP Sheet

The Latest in Disability Research, Advocacy, Policy, and Practice

Winter/Fall 2017 Issue

## TIME FOR FUN



### FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE JADE

By Sean Dunham and Bonnie Dunham<sup>1</sup>

#### *Welcome*

*to the Winter/Spring issue of the RAP Sheet. Playing is a crucial part of a balanced life - it recharges our batteries, opens the door to friendship, and unlocks creativity. With its lakes, mountains, beaches, and vibrant cities and towns, New Hampshire offers unlimited recreational opportunities. And thanks to the hard work of disability advocates and the passage of the ADA, recreation in the Granite State is increasingly accessible. Isn't it time to go have some fun!*

If it's Friday evening, you can be sure to find Sean Dunham at the Jade Dragon in Merrimack, where nearly every week for the past 15 years he has been singing karaoke. Sean said, "Friday is special to me - recycling, library, and Jade Dragon day. At the Jade, I talk to my friends. I sing karaoke. I eat crab rangoon and other good food." Sean is part of the Jade Dragon's family of regulars and his friends at the Jade look out for him.

Sean's joy for singing karaoke is infectious; he loves the feedback he gets from the crowd. He said, "I sing good songs. Sometimes I bring my guitar, too. Why not? My singing makes them happy, and me happy, too!"

The Jade regulars agree. A couple who has dinner at the Jade every Friday said, "We enjoy his enthusiasm. We always stay until Sean sings."

Sean often dedicates his songs to his favorite girl NeSha, one of the bartenders at Jade Dragon. "It makes me feel so happy inside," she said. "He gives me butterflies when he sings to me."

Another regular customer loved his choice of music, "He always sings great songs." Sean eclectic play list includes Bob Seger's *Old Time Rock*

*(Continued on next page)*



Photographer - Bonnie Dunham

Sean Dunham performing at Jade Dragon with John Paul and Friends.

SUSAN COVERT, EDITOR

A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BY THE

DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER-NH, INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY, AND NH COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

(Cover story continued)

and Roll, American Pie, Tomorrow, and Rob Zombie's Dragula, Benny and the Jets, and a lot of Beatles songs.

While most Fridays, the Jade has a DJ and karaoke, some weeks they have live music. When there is a band, they always arrange for Sean to kick off the night with a song. Sean said, "I love it, singing with the band. Like a rock star."

One of Sean's favorite bands to sing with is *John Paul and Friends*. Bandleader, John Paul said, "The real joy

that I get when Sean embraces the stage is the feeling that comes over the crowd each and every time he performs. Sean is a true performer at heart and those who get to hear him are fans from the start."

Summing up his feelings about Friday night at the Jade, Sean said, "I like it a lot, the singing. The songs are in my heart. My heart and my friends – together."

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<sup>1</sup> Bonnie is Sean's mother and a long time advocate at the Parent Information Center



## GO BABY GO! NH



**N**ew Hampshire now has its own chapter of GoBabyGo! This pediatric research organization, founded and led by Dr. Cole Galloway at the University of Delaware, develops innovative technologies so that all people, especially children, can be independently mobile. GoBabyGo!'s custom modified toy cars enable children with restricted mobility to unlock a newfound independence.

Born out of the desire of one local mother to share the joy her own son felt as he cruised around in his newly adapted car, she invited Ben Leo from the University of Delaware up to the Granite State. She presented her idea of a New Hampshire chapter to other moms who signed on to help plan and establish New England's first chapter of GoBabyGo!.

Last Spring's launch of GoBabyGo! New Hampshire was truly a community effort. During a daylong mobility workshop held at the New Hampshire Technical Institute, over 100 volunteers, including family members, therapists, and engineers, adapted cars for eight children. Workshop participants, under the direction of Leo, delighted in drilling into the cars' molded plastic and altering various electronic elements in order to adapt each car to fit the child's specific needs. The workshop's success was on full display as the smallest participants zipped around in their new cars while their parents followed behind, pushing empty wheelchairs and strollers.

Although GoBabyGo! New Hampshire has no major workshops scheduled, one-on-one car adaptations are ongoing. Interested families can inquire at <http://gobabygonh.wixsite.com/gbgnh>.



They are off to the races in their Go Baby Go! cars.



# BOW UNIFIED BASKETBALL

By Julia Freeman-Woolpert, Disability Rights Center - NH

*"The most important measure of how good a game I played was how much better I'd made my teammates play"*

– Bill Russell, retired Boston Celtic All-Star and NBA MVP

The crowd cheers as the players take the court. It's the Bow Falcons vs. the Hanover Marauders Unified basketball. Up and down the court the teams battle. Bow gets the ball and it's passed to Liam Dennehy. Liam takes time as he considers his shot. His teammates urge him on. "Just a minute," says Liam. After thinking some more, he shoots. The ball misses its mark, but Liam is still happy. He's getting to play with his team.

Liam, a Bow High School freshman, may not run very fast or understand all of the rules of basketball or sink that many baskets. Liam would not make the Falcons Junior Varsity team. Nevertheless, Liam is a basketball player. He loves the game and he loves his team. He belongs.

Unified Sports, an offshoot of Special Olympics, is taking off in the Granite State. The program has grown steadily over the past five years; high schools all across the state are now sponsoring Unified soccer, basketball, volleyball, and track and field teams. Unified Sports teams are coed and made up of high school students with and without intellectual disabilities. This year 43 Unified basketball teams, including the Bow Falcons, are competing in New Hampshire.

Unified Sports is administered through the New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA). As it makes clear in its handbook, NHIAA sets high expectations for the program, "The focus of NHIAA Unified Sports is competition (not simply participation). Sports teaches so many life lessons: to work as a team, to follow rules and to be committed. Through sports we can find shared interests that allow friendships to form."

While Unified Sports is competitive, everyone gets to play. It's about working together as a unified team and supporting each team member to do their best. Liam can count on his team. When he goes in to play, his teammates have his back and he has theirs.

Unified Sports in Bow began four years ago when a parent approached Athletic Director Jim Kaufman about bringing the program to the high school. With support

from parents, teachers, and the Student Athletic Leadership Council, Kaufman got Unified Sports up and running. He is now the Unified basketball team coach. United Sports and Kaufman get rave reviews from teammates and fans. Sarra Dennehy, Liam's mom, gives Kaufman credit for all that he's done, "He gets it!"

A Unified Falcon player talks about being on a team with Ian, "This is the happiest kid I have ever seen in my entire life. Not once have I ever seen him with a frown on his face. Every day he is always excited to see me and says we're going to win in our championship again this year. He is an inspiration to me and hopefully to endless others. The world would be a terrible place without people like Liam Dennehy."

If you are interested in bringing Unified Sports to your school, contact Special Olympics of New Hampshire at (603) 624-1250.



Photographer – Julia Freeman-Woolpert

*Falcon's player Liam Dennehy gets set to shoot.*

**A note about competitive sports teams** - Students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified have a right to equal access to and participation in sports and other extracurricular school activities. For more information about the right to participate in extracurricular activities, see <http://www.drcnh.org/RAPwinter2015.pdf>, page 8. For U.S. Department of Education guidance on extracurricular athletics, go to: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201301-504.pdf>. (if the hyperlink doesn't work, copy and paste the link in the search bar on your computer)





## SEE YOU AT THE MOVIES

By Gina Colantuoni assisted by Elisha Wilcox

I really enjoy learning new things and being out in the community. I especially enjoy going to the movies. I love all kinds of movies -Science Fiction, Fantasy, Action, Thrillers, Superheroes, History, Adventure, and True Life stories. I am a writer and movies help me to imagine and come up with new and exciting ideas for my stories.

Because I am deaf and use a wheelchair if I want to go out to a movie the theater has to be accessible and provide closed captioning. There are two theaters near my house that I can use.

At Cinemagic in Hooksett, NH I can check out a captioning device that fits into a cup holder. It is a boxed screen that sits on top of an extended flexible neck. This is the device that I prefer; it's easy to read and can be moved side to side or up and down depending on how I want to sit. Unfortunately, this large multiplex theater only offers closed captioning for one of the many movies they are currently showing. The closed caption movie choice changes each week. This really limits my options. I may not be interested in the closed caption movie that is showing and there are a lot of movies at Cinemagic I want to see that are not closed caption.

My other theater choice is Regal, which is also in Hooksett. The closed caption device at Regal is very different than the one Cinemagic uses. At Regal the captioning is viewed through glasses that go over your head and are attached to a box where you insert a card that has the captioning for the movie. There is a closed captioning option for all the movies being shown at Regal. When I first tried the glasses I really hated them; they were very heavy and the small captioning was hard to read. Recently, I tried using them again and they were OK. I put up with them because they give me more choices to see movies that interest me.

Both Regal and Cinemagic are accessible and the location for their handicapped seating is nice, not too close to the screen or too far away that I can't be part of the action. The area for my wheelchair is wide and there is a seat for my support person Elisha to sit beside me.

We have seen lots of great movies together and are looking forward to seeing many more. Beauty and the Beast, Power Rangers, and Wonder Woman are on my To See list. I am very happy to have theaters near me that are accessible and offer closed captioning. I recommend these two theaters to anyone who uses a wheelchair or who needs closed captioning. I look forward to having more and more people join me at the theater.



Photographer - Elisha Wilcox

Gina Colantuoni at the movies wearing the closed captioning device.

*Come join in the fun! Hope to see YOU at the movies!*

### ◆ ◆ ◆ This Just In! ◆ ◆ ◆

Over the next two years, rules will be phased in requiring theaters to provide movies with captioning and audio description for people with vision or hearing loss. Theaters must have and maintain equipment for closed captioning and audio descriptions, give public notice that accommodations are available, and have staff available to help customers use the equipment. Captioning and audio description must be available for all screenings, unless that would be an undue burden.

The rules do not apply to ALL theaters or to ALL movies. Drive-ins and theaters that show only analog (non-digital) movies are exempt. Digital movies not available with captioning or audio description are not required to be accessible.

For more information - [https://www.ada.gov/regs2016/movie\\_captioning\\_qa.html](https://www.ada.gov/regs2016/movie_captioning_qa.html).



## NORTHEAST PASSAGE: MAKING RECREATION ACCESSIBLE

By Keely Ames, Associate Director of Operations, Northeast Passage

**T**he mission of Northeast Passage is to create an environment where individuals with disabilities can enjoy recreation with the same freedom of choice, quality of life, and independence as their non-disabled peers. We strive to empower individuals with disabilities to define, pursue, and achieve their therapeutic recreation and adaptive sports goals.

Participating in regular recreation improves health, happiness, and self-awareness. It takes you out of your comfort zone and boosts confidence, offers opportunities for making friends and enjoying quality-family time. We believe that access to barrier-free recreation is a key element in improving quality of life for individuals with disabilities, particularly in New England where geography and weather can make participating in recreation challenging for those with mobility impairments. Through education and problem solving, Northeast Passage works with each of our participants to help make New England's countless recreational opportunities more accessible.

Located at the University of New Hampshire in Durham, Northeast Passage's Licensed Recreation Therapists use adaptive equipment to make it possible for individuals with disabilities to access all the recreational activities that New England has to offer. Northeast Passage has over 500 pieces of recreation equipment – everything from beach wheelchairs to water skis – and each piece is available for rent by the day or week.

Northeast Passage offers seasonal recreational and sports opportunities for individuals of all ages and abilities. There's no excuse to stay indoors! This winter, try cross-country skiing in New Hampshire's North Country or ice skating on Portsmouth's Puddle Dock Pond at Strawberry Banke. If you're looking for a competitive outlet, there are team opportunities in sled hockey, power soccer, or wheelchair rugby. Warm weather recreation includes cycling, golf, kayaking, hiking, and water skiing. Northeast Passage events

and adaptive recreational opportunities are available across the New England region.

Through its Community/Home Based Recreational Therapy program, Northeast Passage also provides person-centered treatment for individuals or groups in their home communities, using recreation to improve health, and independence. A unique component of this program is our outreach to veterans in New Hampshire and Maine. In the last three years, we have worked with over 300 veterans with physical, chronic and mental health disabilities. Working one-to-one with veterans in their home communities we are helping them to remove the barriers that are preventing them from accessing their life and community to the fullest.

For more information, visit Northeast Passage's website at [www.nepassage.org](http://www.nepassage.org) and see our current schedule at [www.nepassage.org/calendar](http://www.nepassage.org/calendar).

To find additional adaptive recreation opportunities in your area (including New England ski areas with adaptive downhill ski programs), visit <http://www.disabled-sportsusa.org/location-map/>



Photo credit - Danielle Durocher

*It's a perfect day for skating.*



## JUST ASK!

By Linda Quintanilha, Organizing Director ABLE NH

I was recently with a group of parents and asked how I was able to keep my kids so busy with after school activities. My reply was, "Just ask." When the school sends home flyers for Lego Club or Drama Club, if my children show any interest, we just sign up. School sponsored activities are available to all students and schools must find a way to make accommodations for kids with different abilities, including my daughter Mary.

Sure, there were times when I thought maybe the school might follow up with a call and apologetically say it just wasn't possible, but those calls never came. Instead, school staff contacted me to explain how they were going to make it happen and asked for my feedback on their plans.

Taking part in clubs and activities that are not school sponsored can be more difficult. In many cases, schools are not required to provide a one-on-one aide or supports for children who may need some assistance in order to participate.

When my daughter was in elementary school, the notice for the Ski Club came home. NOT A SCHOOL SPONSORED CLUB/EVENT was printed in all caps at the bottom of the flyer. I knew from my oldest child's grade school experience that almost 90% of the school's stu-

dents were part of the Ski Club. I didn't want any of my kids to miss out on the opportunity to learn how to ski.

Reading the all caps note, I interpreted it to mean, "Kids with different abilities are not welcome." I reviewed the special education materials from my training with the Parent Information Center and prepared to go fight with the school district. I fully expected the worst. If the school said no, I would have to make arrangements on my own for supports and likely fight the school in order to allow my daughter to participate at all.

My husband, Wagner tried to calm me down as I worked myself up over the idea of even filling out the club's sign up sheet. Admittedly, I had gone into that dark space that we all find ourselves in from time to time. I knew he was done talking about it when he said, "Linda, for crying out loud, just send in the form and see what happens!"

So that is what I did. I know it was the first time that a student with a significant disability had signed up for Ski Club. I kept waiting for the school to call and tell me, "Your kid isn't welcome." That call never came. Mary's team had already told the principal that if all kids were not able to participate, they weren't going to have Ski Club that year. Apparently, they had gotten

themselves worked up too and had already made arrangements. An aide was provided and accommodations were made. They simply asked that I be within a short drive in case anything came up and they needed help. Ski Club is a longstanding part of the overall culture for our elementary school. Everyone knew that denying a child the opportunity to participate because of a need for accommodations sent the wrong message to all of the students in the school.

Perhaps our family has been lucky, but I believe in most cases if we allow our schools the opportunity to do the right thing, they will.



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## START MONKEYING AROUND!

By Déodonné Bhattarai, JD/MPH, Volunteer Lawyer, Disability Rights Center - NH

**L**ike many parents whose children experience a disability, I recognize the importance of showing up, getting involved, and when necessary, challenging the status quo. With that in mind, I recently attended my first Friends of White Park meeting. With its Monkey Around Playground and skating pond, White Park plays a large role in my child's life. When I heard that the playground was going to be rebuilt, I decided it was time to get involved.

For children or caregivers with mobility challenges, the current playground presents major accessibility issues. For example, the bark mulch used for the park's ground cover renders my son's wheelchair useless. His ability to enjoy the playground is entirely dependent

upon my carrying him and being able to fit on or in the playground's equipment and structures. It makes for a long and tiring afternoon.

Friends of White Park, in conjunction with the Concord Parks Department, have started the planning process for upgrading the playground. As it did when the playground was first built nearly twenty-five years ago, the Parks Department is reaching out to the community for ideas and feedback. By working with Friends of White Park, I am hopeful that when the new Monkey Around opens in 2018 it will be fully accessible and that my son will be able, on his own, to join in with the other kids monkeying around at the park.



## PLAYING WITH PLAY

By Ron King, Architect and President Natural Playgrounds

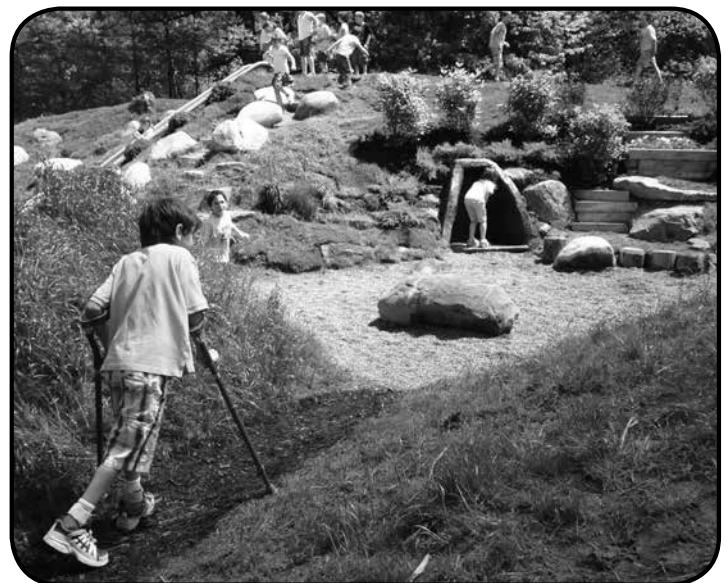
**P**laying isn't limited to kids. Adults play and so do dogs, bears, squirrels, cats, elephants, and birds. I don't know about snakes fish, flies or mosquitoes, but I'll bet they have bouts of playful behavior, too. Maybe play is just part of being alive.

And play definitely isn't limited to playgrounds. It can happen anywhere. A garden can offer playing and learning experiences. So can a quiet, contemplative spot where you sit and watch the clouds roll by or the wind play in the trees. At Natural Playgrounds Company we design and build landscapes in which people can play and learn. It's easy to provide accessible, inclusive, universal play opportunities if we loosen up a little.

A game table along a path, a huge pile of sand, a tumbling waterfall and stream, a cave, curved arched bridge, big thunder panel, musical fence, hill slide, rock scramble, an interactive sculpture, shinny log, grove of fruit trees, tree house — all of these offer opportunities for play and learning. Using the natural landscape provides enjoyment for children and adults, whatever their abilities.

Natural playgrounds easily meet the principles of Universal Design: they're good for people with diverse abilities, they easily accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities, they're simple and intuitive, they need no interpretation to use, they are inherently safe and enjoyable, and the space is

*(Continued on page 13)*



Credit - Courtesy Natural Playgrounds Company

*Kids exploring a natural play ground*



## PAJAMARAMA

By Julia Freeman-Woolpert, Disability Rights Center-NH

It's almost 7 PM at the Barnes & Noble bookstore in Nashua, and pajama-clad children are pouring in with their parents. The aroma of hot chocolate fills the air and sleigh bells are ringing. Just inside the store's entrance, a train conductor is taking tickets. Tonight we are riding the Polar Express!

The conductor, Sean Purdy, is the storyteller for Pajamarama, a free, fun-filled family event that happens every Friday at Barnes & Noble. Fluent in three languages and learning a fourth, Sean shares his love of language and different cultures by choosing stories from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. While tonight features a Christmas story, it's clear looking at the faces around the room that this is a multicultural event.

The conductor cries, "All Aboard!" and the story begins. Sean is accompanied by two students from the ASL /English interpreting program at UNH Manchester. Amber-Rose Couture and Samantha Cunningham, both dressed in dark clothing so their hands can be clearly seen, are interpreting for the deaf people in the audience.

Damanta Dangal, who is hard of hearing, and her husband Bhawani, who is deaf, are here with their two hearing children. This is the family's second Pajamarama

story time. They loved their first visit so much they drove all the way from Concord for tonight's story. Through the interpreters, Damanta and Bhawani can enjoy the Polar Express along with their kids. They visualize the train bringing the children to the North Pole, Santa's sleigh rising into the sky, and the boy listening to the beautiful sound of the small bell. Soon everyone gathered around for the story knows the ASL signs for Santa Claus, hot chocolate, train, and bell.

Nationally recognized for excellence, UNH ASL/English interpreting program is an in depth four-year degree program where students acquire fluency in ASL and interpreting skills and learn about Deaf culture. Program director and UNH professor, Jack Hoza, explained, "Experiential learning is a big part of the program. It's only by practicing that you can learn ASL and interpreting. This collaboration with Barnes & Noble is a great thing for students."

Aimee Stevens, an instructor at UNH Manchester who organizes field experiences for the Interpreting program, worked with Barnes and Noble to provide interpreters for Pajamarama. "The students love it," she said. "These types of opportunities are perfect. They are low-pressure and give the students exposure to interpreting in public. It's very empowering!"

After the story, Damanta and Bhawani stayed and signed with the interpreters while their children explored the bookshelves. Originally from Bhutan, they talked about how much they enjoyed learning about American culture and Christmas through the story. Damanta also noted, "Kids need to get the idea that stories are fun."

Bhawani was equally enthusiastic about the experience. He signed, "Deaf parents can learn the story with their kids, and then the family can talk together in ASL about the story." He added, "I want Pajamarama to come to Concord!"



*All aboard for Pajamaram story time at Barnes and Noble*




For more information about the ASL/English Interpreting Program at UNH Manchester visit: <http://manchester.unh.edu/academics/degree-programs/asl-english-interpreting>

## Communication: It's Your Right!

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, deaf and hard of hearing people have a right to effective communication with government offices, places of public accommodation, and employers. "Effective communication" can mean many things and depends on the person and the situation. It might include provision of an ASL interpreter, a CART reporter, or auxiliary aids such as assistive listening devices. Or it might be as simple as writing notes back and forth.


The communication should be equally effective as that provided to people without disabilities. For those who use ASL to communicate, providing an interpreter might be required for complicated or long meetings, or for serious matters. An interpreter typically would not be needed for simpler interactions, such as a sales clerk communicating with a deaf customer. If a business or organization can show that hiring an interpreter would be an undue burden, it may not have to provide one.

*Want to know more?*  
<http://drcnh.org/interflyer.pdf>


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**T**he Disability Rights Center - New Hampshire (DRC) welcomes Stephanie Patrick, MSW, as our new Executive Director. Stephanie joins us from Louisiana, where she was Director of Policy and Planning at the Advocacy Center of Louisiana, the state's Protection and Advocacy organization. She is a leader in the Louisiana disability rights movement and has been active on the national front with the National Disability Rights Network.

More: [www.drcnh.org/Patrick.html](http://www.drcnh.org/Patrick.html)





## SEE AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL – NATIONAL PARKS AND FEDERAL RECREATIONAL LANDS ACCESS PASS

By Déodonné Bhattarai, JD/MPH, Volunteer Lawyer, Disability Rights Center - NH

On a cold, windy day following this year's first snowstorm, my two-year old son and I headed to the Hopkinton-Everett Lake US Army Corps of Engineers station, in Contoocook. We were making the trip in hopes of obtaining an America The Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Land Access Pass. This is a free, lifetime pass for U.S. Citizens and permanent residents with permanent disabilities which entitles the pass holder and those with them (or up to three additional adults where per-person fees are charged) free access to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites throughout the country. New Hampshire has two sites, the White Mountain National Forest and Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish.

Having called ahead to make sure they had passes available, we were met with a large smile by Stephen Dermody, a Project Manager at the site. I arrived with my passport and driver's license, and multiple copies of a letter from my son's doctor attesting that he has a permanent physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of his major life activities, including walking. I expected to leave behind a trail of paperwork.

Instead, Stephen chatted easily with the toddler who had just rolled into his office and with refreshing, non-judgmental simplicity, he opened the book of park passes and flipped to the Access Pass page.

We found applying for the Access Pass in person to be incredibly simple, but my son's disability is clearly manifest by his wheelchair and we were able to get to a Federal recreation site without much trouble. Applying in person meant that after a 10-minute visit with Stephen, we left with pass in hand. We didn't need to fill out an on-line application or pay a processing fee.

If you are unable to get to a Federal recreation site, you can apply for a pass through the mail. Go to [https://store.usgs.gov/pass/access\\_pass\\_application.pdf](https://store.usgs.gov/pass/access_pass_application.pdf) to download an application. In addition to the completed



*Stephen Dermody issues an America the Beautiful access pass to a very happy young camper.*

application, you also will need to submit proper paperwork, including proof of citizenship or residency and documentation of disability. There is a one-time \$10 processing fee for passes obtained through the mail, but compared to the \$80 annual fee for a regular park pass, it is a pretty good deal. And if you are able to make it to the Hopkinton-Everett Lake station, tell Stephen we say hi!

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## HAMPTON BEACH – A GREAT SPOT FOR ACCESSIBLE FUN

Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, Executive Director NH Council and Developmental Disabilities

**H**aving fun is an essential ingredient to a fulfilling life and Portsmouth residents Michelle Schladenhauffen and Terry Ann Boucher don't miss an opportunity to take part in the many activities that the Seacoast has to offer. These friends both use motorized wheel chairs and make sure that the places they visit are accessible. When the weather turns warm, one of their favorite spots is Hampton Beach.

Hampton Beach, along with many of New Hampshire's beaches and state parks, has made an effort to improve accessibility and accommodate visitors with disabilities and their families. Hampton Beach has two boardwalks with accessibility ramps, as well as accessible and family restrooms. Sand friendly beach wheel chairs, which are perfect for fun in the water, are also available on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Sea Shell, Hampton Beach's outdoor amphitheater boasts nightly shows during the summer. Avid music lovers, Michelle and Terry Ann enjoy being able to hear music at the Sea Shell which has ramp access from the boardwalk. Terry Ann says staff at Hampton Beach are incredibly helpful, even letting her use the staff bathrooms when the public restrooms are too sandy. She describes Hampton Beach as one of the best accessible beaches she's visited.



Photographer – Donna Goodwin

*Michelle Schladenhauffen and CJ Geering with Robbie Merrill, Godsmack bass guitarist, at the Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom.*

Along with the Sea Shell, the Hampton Beach Casino Ballroom is another popular music venue. Its open-floor design makes it especially accessible for wheelchair users and Terry Ann reports that the Casino Ballroom bathrooms are spacious enough to accommodate a sit-to-stand if needed. Michelle says the security guards and other staff are consistently friendly and accommodating. On her first visit in 2015 to hear Godsmack, the staff looked after her and made sure she got a spot right by the stage. It was a great show and Michelle even had an opportunity to meet Robbie Merrill, Godsmack's bass player.

During the summer Hampton Beach puts on firework displays every Wednesday and to commemorate the Fourth of July and other celebrations. This bustling seaside community also hosts a number of annual events including a sand sculpture contest, talent competitions, a children's festival, a kite festival, and seafood festival. Michelle has attended many of these and cautions that the streets and sidewalks can get very crowded. She also notes that not all the restaurants in the area are accessible. If you plan to be at Hampton Beach for special events, give yourself extra time and be prepared for the crowds.

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[contact@iodbookstore.com](mailto:contact@iodbookstore.com)





## HAVING FUN, COURTESY OF THE ADA

By Julia Freeman-Woolpert, M.Ed., Disability Rights Center – NH

*“To the art of working well a civilized race would add the art of playing well.” ~George Santayana*

**Y**ou’re making plans for the weekend, but you’re worried that your chosen destination won’t accommodate your wheelchair or address your communication or other special needs. Should you call ahead and check or just show up and see how it goes? Whatever you choose, it helps to know how the law applies to you and your destination.

Under two sections of the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are protected from discrimination in most recreational facilities. Title II of the ADA applies to places operated by state or local governments, Title III applies to private businesses. The rules under both these sections are quite similar, but there are a few important differences.<sup>1</sup>

### **Title II – State and Local Governments**

State and local governments and their departments and agencies (also known as “public entities”) must make their programs, services, and activities available to all regardless of disability. In order to ensure equal access and opportunity, these programs and services must be provided in integrated settings unless there is a very compelling reason not to. Think of the fun possibilities: wheelchair accessible trails at state and local parks, accessible playgrounds, sand friendly wheelchairs at Hampton Beach, city sponsored festivals with interpreters, and so much more!

There are some things public entities are not required to do. They do not have to change the essential nature of the program or include people who are “unqualified” to take part in what they have to offer. Public entities can impose reasonable, legitimate safety requirements as long as these aren’t based on stereotypes or misinformation.

Buildings constructed by a state or local government after 1992 must be accessible. When a building is altered, the public entity also must make the altered areas accessible. However, public entities do not necessarily have to make all of their existing facilities physically accessible. There are a number of ways they may provide program accessibility, including relocation of a service or program to an accessible facility, or provision of services at alternate accessible sites.

Access is about more than architecture. Rules, policies, and practices also may need to be modified to ensure equal access. Communication access may need to be provided on park tours and service animals may be permitted when pets are otherwise not allowed.

For example, a town recreation department offers summer swim lessons to children between the ages of 8 and 16. Any child, whether or not they have a disability, who is under the age of 8 would not qualify for swim lessons. However, a child who is 8, but immature and occasionally disruptive due to a disability, still qualifies to take lessons and the program may need to make accommodations. This might include providing extra staff for the class or, for a child who uses a wheelchair and the pool is inaccessible, the town may need to install a lift or a ramp to the pool. The town also cannot exclude a child with disabilities from the pool due to “safety” concerns if those concerns are not legitimate or if they are based on misinformation.

### **Title III – Public Accommodations**

So many things to do - movies, museums, baseball games, gyms, ski resorts, petting zoos, mini-golf, restaurants, and your local pub! Private businesses or “public accommodations” also are prohibited from

<sup>1</sup> While the ADA provides protection against discrimination by local and state government and private businesses, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides protection against discrimination by federal recreational sites, including national parks, monuments and other federal facilities.

discriminating against people with disabilities. The rules for private businesses are similar to those for state and local governments: goods and services must be provided in an integrated setting, rules and procedures must be modified if they deny equal access, and effective communication must be provided.

The ADA requires that all new construction of public accommodations be architecturally accessible. All alterations that could affect the usability of a facility must be made in an accessible manner to the maximum extent feasible.

For older buildings, physical barriers must be removed when this is “readily achievable”; meaning the removal is “easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense.” This could include ramp installation, widening doors, or changing door hardware.

### **Ready, set, go!**

Once you know your rights, there are steps you can take to ensure your favorite places are accessible. If there are barriers, you can start by asking the management for the accommodations and modifications you need. Get others involved; recruit family, friends and colleagues to also ask for accessibility and accommodations. If you need more information about how the law applies in your specific situation or want to find out more about your rights, call the Disability Rights Center at **603-228-0432** or **1-800-834-1721**.

So don't let barriers get in your way. Get out there and have a good time!

*(Continued from page 7)*

designed for use by everyone regardless of body size or mobility. (<http://www.accessibleplayground.net>)

We need to shake the idea of playgrounds being limited to places full of inherently inaccessible equipment. Instead, envision the fabulous play and learning opportunities that can be created by taking advantage of all that nature has to offer. If we could expand our notion of what a playground is, we wouldn't have to invent all kinds of elaborate contrivances to make inaccessible play equipment accessible.

It's hard for most people to disassociate playgrounds from equipment. Over the past 80 years, the playground industry has worked hard to convince us that the only way kids can have safe fun is to play on their thoroughly tested equipment.

The injury statistics, however, indicate otherwise. The American Orthopedics Association reports that the cost of yearly accidents on manufactured playgrounds tops \$14 billion! It turns out kids are bored. We've interviewed over 6,000 children who told us they are tired of the same playground day-after-day, year-after-year. They make it exciting by doing things they shouldn't do. and that's how they get hurt.

But the playground equipment industry continues to make this stuff, even though it's not safe, and even though kids find it boring. The safety industry responds by developing ever more mandates, when all we really need to do is get back to nature.

Use the landscape as a backdrop, give kids gardens to explore and hills to roll down, sticks to make forts, huge sand play areas where they can dig forever, and mud to make pies, and you'll have the best play environment ever!

For more information visit  
[www.naturalplaygrounds.com](http://www.naturalplaygrounds.com)

# IOD TRAINING & EVENTS

## nTIDE Lunch & Learn Webinar Series

On the first Friday of every month, corresponding with the Bureau of Labor Statistics jobs report, the Employment Policy and Measurement Rehabilitation and Research Training Center will be offering a live broadcast via Zoom Webinar to share the results of the latest nTIDE findings. In addition, we will provide news and updates from the field of Disability Employment, as well as host an invited panelist who will discuss current disability related findings and events.

**Dates:** March 10, April 7, and May 5, 2017

**Time:** 12:00 p.m. EST

**Location:** [www.researchondisability.org/ntide](http://www.researchondisability.org/ntide)

## PBIS Universal Team Spring Retreat: Improve PBIS Implementation

Universal PBIS school teams will review their progress and plan for continued PBIS implementation. This retreat will include presentations, tools, and guidance to help teams explore and develop their goals, objectives, and strategies for universal PBIS implementation. It may also include presentations by schools that have been particularly effective in implementation of PBIS. Teams will leave with a work plan for implementation for the next several months.

**Date:** March 8, 2017

**Time:** 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Presenters:** JoAnne Malloy, Ph.D.

**Location:** Radisson Hotel Downtown Manchester, Manchester, NH

**Cost:** \$139 per session; \$119 per person for groups of 3 or more



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Nixon, Vogelman, Barry, Slawsky & Simoneau P.A. is proud to support the RAP Sheet, the DRC, IOD/UNH, and NHDDC, and the Disability Community.

Considered by many to be the state's preeminent personal injury and medical malpractice law firm, Nixon, Vogelman, Barry, Slawsky & Simoneau P.A. also has a diverse practice which includes employment discrimination, Social Security disability claims, and civil rights, particularly protecting the rights of persons who are deaf or have disabilities.

Offices are located at 77 Central Street,  
Manchester, NH 03101.

For more information, see <http://www.davenixonlaw.com>.

## Exploring School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

This workshop will highlight the core features of PBIS, focusing on examples, tools and practices that support students and help schools improve their culture, climate and safety. You will learn how to assess your current interventions, implement evidence-based practices and empower and facilitate leadership teams to successfully implement PBIS using data-driven decision making. Practical tools for monitoring fidelity and student outcomes will be shared. There will also be time to plan, interact and ask questions. This training is being offered by UNH Professional Development & Training.

**Date:** March 31, 2017

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Presenters:** Heidi Cloutier, MSW

**Location:** UNH Professional Development & Training,  
Pease Tradeport/Portsmouth Location,  
119 International Drive, Portsmouth, NH

**Cost:** \$159

## New Hampshire Leadership Series Annual Fundraiser Gala

Please join us for the 2016 NH Leadership Fundraiser Gala on Wednesday, April 5, 2016 at the Capital Center for the Arts in Concord, NH. Come reconnect with alumni, meet sponsors and the 2016 class, and enjoy an evening to support the Leadership Series. There will be a light buffet, cash bar, large silent auction, the sixth annual Brianna Dillon Leadership Medal presentation, and inspirational stories from Leadership graduates.

**NEW Date:** Wednesday, April 5, 2017

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**Location:** Capitol Center for the Arts,  
44 South Main Street, Concord, NH

### 3 EASY WAYS TO REGISTER!

1



online

**[WWW.IOD.UNH.EDU](http://WWW.IOD.UNH.EDU)**

2



call to register or to request a  
registration form

**603.228.2084**

3



mail a completed registration form  
**INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY**  
**56 OLD SUNCOOK ROAD, SUITE 2**  
**CONCORD, NH 03301**





INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY / UCED  
A University Center for Excellence on Disability

### PBIS Behavior Support Team Spring Retreat: Expanding Interventions through Creative Partnerships

Building partnerships with our community mental health providers is an integral part of establishing an effective multi-tiered system of support. This session will highlight supports and interventions that can be utilized at the Tier 2 level by partnering with various community stakeholders. Learn about strategic methods for building partnerships. Practical examples from the field will be shared.

**Date:** April 13, 2017  
**Time:** 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
**Presenters:** Kathy Francoeur, M.Ed.  
**Location:** Radisson Hotel Downtown Manchester, Manchester, NH  
**Cost:** \$139 per session; \$119 per person for groups of 3 or more

### Age of Champions Health New Hampshire's 10th Annual Transition Summit: Building on a Decade of Success

This fun community event brings together faculty, staff, students, and community members, to promote healthy, active aging. Free and open to the public, the event features vendor booths, student booths, health assessments, film screenings, and exercise classes.

**Date:** April 22, 2017  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
**Location:** UNH Field House, Durham, NH

### 2017 START National Training Institute (SNTI)


The SNTI will feature leading clinicians in the fields of IDD & Mental Health. Content strands include: Positive Approaches & Cultural Competency, Children & Families, Networking & Capacity Building, Psychiatry & Primary Health, Health & Well-Being.

**Date:** April 30 – May 2, 2017  
**Location:** Doral Arrowwood Conference Center, Rye Brook, Westchester County, NY  
**Website:** [www.centerforstartservices.org/2017-SNTI](http://www.centerforstartservices.org/2017-SNTI)

### Prevention of Disruptive Classroom Behavior: PBIS II

Learn about evidence-based classroom management strategies with a focus on prevention of disruptive behavior. Participants will: explore the function of behavior and learn creative strategies to support students with emotional behavioral challenges in the regular classroom; discuss and practice intervention methods utilizing Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS); explore tools to assist teachers to evaluate and enhance teaching practices; learn a simple process to understand challenging behaviors and how to intervene and redirect these behaviors; increase knowledge of evidence-based classroom management practices, and understand how to apply a function-based perspective in supporting students. This training is being offered by UNH Professional Development & Training.

**Date:** May 17, 2017  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
**Presenters:** Heidi Cloutier, MSW  
**Location:** UNH Professional Development & Training, Manchester Campus, 88 Commercial Street, Manchester, NH  
**Cost:** \$159



**5TH ANNUAL**  
**SELF ADVOCACY CONFERENCE** **LEARN IT! LIVE IT! LOVE IT!**

**Save the Date! 5/5/2017**  
Grappone Conference Center, Concord NH

**Keynote Presentation**  
"The Fight Worth Fighting" Samuel Habib, Advocate, Filmmaker

**HIGH 5!**

**Spotlight Session Topics**

- ◊ Relationships
- ◊ Social Media
- ◊ WIPA: Understanding Your Benefits
- ◊ The Person in Me: An Open Discussion
- ◊ Service Rights
- ◊ Best Foot Forward

**Presented by Advocate NH**  
in partnership with:

- ◊ Disability Rights Center – NH
- ◊ DreamCatchers 2.0
- ◊ Granite State Independent Living
- ◊ NH Bureau of Developmental Services
- ◊ NH Council on Developmental Disabilities
- ◊ People First of New Hampshire
- ◊ The Rising Stars
- ◊ UNH Institute on Disability

*All accessibility requests will be accommodated.*

[www.iod.unh.edu/advocate2017](http://www.iod.unh.edu/advocate2017)

# RAP Sheet

The Latest in Disability Research, Advocacy, Policy, and Practice

Winter/Spring 2017 Issue

## NH COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

2½ Beacon Street, Suite 10  
Concord, NH 03301-4447

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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- ◆ *Northeast Passage*
- ◆ *ADA Protections*
- ◆ *Personal Stories*

## DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER - NH

64 North Main Street, Suite 2, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Concord, NH 03301-4913

Voice and TDD: (603) 228-0432 ◆ 1-800-834-1721 ◆ FAX: (603) 225-2077

TDD access also through NH Relay Service: 1-800-735-2964 (Voice and TDD)

E-mail: [advocacy@drcnh.org](mailto:advocacy@drcnh.org) ◆ Website: [www.drcnh.org](http://www.drcnh.org)

*"Protection and Advocacy System for New Hampshire"*

*The Disabilities Rights Center is dedicated to eliminating barriers to the full and equal enjoyment of civil and other legal rights for people with disabilities.*

## INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY/UCED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Durham Office:

10 West Edge Drive, Suite 101 | Durham, NH 03824

Phone: 603.862.1769 | Relay: 711 | Fax: 603.862.0555

Concord Office:

56 Old Suncook Road, Suite 2 | Concord, NH 03301

Phone: 603.228.2084 | Relay: 711 | Fax: 603.228.3270

*The Institute on Disability advances policies and systems changes, promising practices, education and research that strengthen communities and ensure full access, equal opportunities, and participation for all persons.*

## NH COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

2½ Beacon Street, Suite 10

Concord, NH 03301-4447

Phone: (603) 271-3236 ◆ TTY/TDD: 1-800-735-2964 ◆ Website: [www.nhddc.org](http://www.nhddc.org)

*Dignity, full rights of citizenship, equal opportunity, and full participation for all New Hampshire citizens with developmental disabilities.*

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