

Family Care Council Florida
WE ARE PART OF YOUR
COMMUNITY

Family Care Council Florida
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FCCFlorida.org



Building the American Dream
For All Individuals With
Developmental Disabilities



Family Care Council Florida

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Area 7

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Area 8

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Area 9

Karen Oberg

Area 10

Gilda Pacheco
Marty Norris

Area 11

Rosa Maria Barbara

Area 12

Mary Ellen Ottman

Area 13

Karen Huscher

Area 14

Lisa Miller
Michael Daniels

Area 15

Melody Hearn

Greetings!

Family Care Councils across the state wish to acknowledge the essential role that your support provides to ensure the safety, health, and community participation of people with developmental disabilities in Florida.

We have enclosed information regarding the mission, purpose, and accomplishments that the Family Care Councils have achieved during the year by assisting families to believe in the future, as well as the 2016 Family Care Council Legislative Platform for your review.

We also have a few personal profiles that will provide you with a glimpse into the lives of some of your constituents who happen to have developmental disabilities.

Should you have any questions about the information provided, please contact us at 1-800-470-8101 or visit our website at FCCFlorida.org.

Sincerely,

Pauline S. Lipps
FCCF Chairperson

The mission of the Family Care Council Florida is to advocate, educate, and empower individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, partnering with the Agency, to bring quality services to individuals for dignity and choice.

Legislative Platform 2016

Family Care Council Florida (FCCF) is comprised of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. We are committed to educating, advocating for, and empowering every Florida family having a member with a developmental disability. We have identified the following 2016 legislative issues:

To ensure the continued success of the iBudget, adequate funding must be appropriated to:

- ❖ Ensure that the Federal CMS-required person-centered care is implemented in service provision,
- ❖ Ensure that adequate wages are provided for the recruitment, retention and appropriate training of direct support personnel delivering waiver services, in compliance with the U.S. Department of Labor Home Care Rule.

We continue to advocate for the active elimination of the APD iBudget waiver waiting list, and urge the Florida Legislature to approve substantial additional funds for this purpose.

We recommend that school Resource Officers across the state receive training from Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) on behavioral crisis techniques and seclusion and restraint policies in schools. The reduction plan is already in place for schools.

We support the 2016/2017 funding of the Arc of Florida's Dental Project that has successfully recruited dentists and provides dental care necessary to the health and self-esteem of individuals with developmental disabilities.



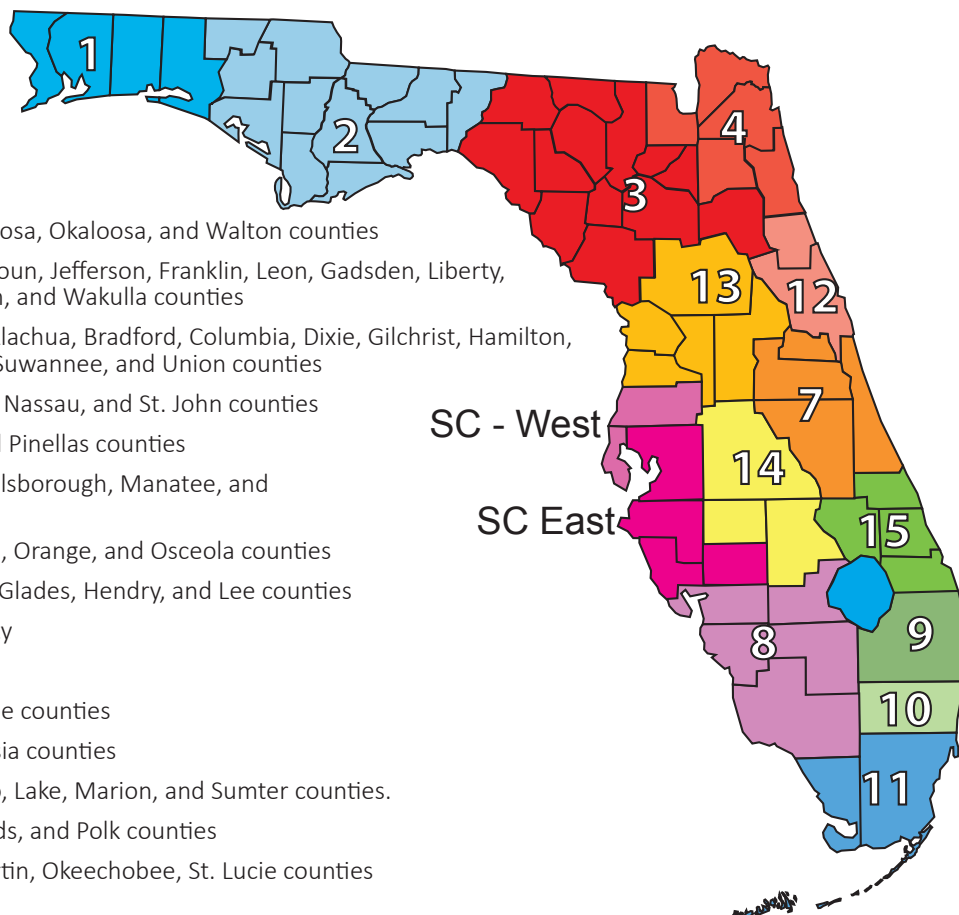
Family Care Council Background

In 1993, the Florida Legislature created the Family Care Councils (Section 393.502, Florida Statutes) in each service area of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) to advise the agency, develop a plan for the delivery of family support services within the local area, and monitor the implementation and effectiveness of services and supports provided under the plan.

While APD has the responsibility for the welfare and dignity of individuals with developmental disabilities, the Family Care Councils (FCC) are governor-appointed volunteers who advocate for people with developmental disabilities and their families. There are 15 local FCCs throughout the state. Each council is made up of 10 to 15 members reflecting the geographical areas and the various disabilities, ethnicity, and ages served by the agency. The membership is comprised of individuals with developmental disabilities, parents, siblings, grandparents, and guardians of people with developmental disabilities who qualify for APD services. In addition, each council is independent from the others. Most FCCs are active with other local organizations and partner to provide community forums, events, and conferences to benefit individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Through the Family Care Council Florida (FCCF), representatives from each FCC meet bimonthly to educate and discuss common concerns while working together to represent individuals with developmental disabilities and their families as a united voice.

Local Family Care Councils



- Area 1-Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties
- Area 2-Bay, Jackson, Calhoun, Jefferson, Franklin, Leon, Gadsden, Liberty, Gulf, Holmes, Washington, and Wakulla counties
- Area 3-Madison, Taylor, Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Putnam, Suwannee, and Union counties
- Area 4-Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. John counties
- Suncoast West-Pasco and Pinellas counties
- Suncoast East-DeSoto, Hillsborough, Manatee, and Sarasota counties
- Area 7-Brevard, Seminole, Orange, and Osceola counties
- Area 8-Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee counties
- Area 9-Palm Beach County
- Area 10-Broward County
- Area 11-Dade and Monroe counties
- Area 12-Flagler and Volusia counties
- Area 13-Citrus, Hernando, Lake, Marion, and Sumter counties.
- Area 14-Hardee, Highlands, and Polk counties
- Area 15-Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, St. Lucie counties

Family Care Council Florida

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Family Care Council Florida is to advocate, educate, and empower individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, partnering with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), to bring quality services to individuals for dignity and choice.

FCCF 2014-2015 REPORT

FCC Accomplishments Summary

There are 15 FCCs around the state that have as their purpose and primary functions to:

- Advise APD;
- Develop a plan for the delivery of family support services within the local area;
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of services and supports;
- Provide education and outreach to families;
- Review and make recommendations as to the effectiveness of the delivery of supports and services;
- Advocate for local community and family needs;
- Meet and share information with other FCCs.

- ❖ Through FCCF, Area FCC representatives met bimonthly fulfilling Section 393.502, F.S. mandate to meet and share information between APD Regional/Area Family Care Councils. Conference calls to update and promote discussions were held in between the bimonthly meetings as issues warranted. FCC members mentor other councils individually and by attending local FCC meetings.
- ❖ FCCs thanked Florida Legislators and Governor Rick Scott for legislation that supported an additional \$40 million dollars to expand the iBudget Medicaid waiver to help take approximately 2,000 individuals off the APD waiting list, \$1 million designated to the Employment Enhancement Project, and the implementation of the ABLE Act which ensures every person has the opportunity to reach their full potential regardless of the challenges they may face.
- ❖ Area FCCs have experienced membership growth in the past two years. Each FCC has actively recruited and recommended applicants for their local FCC, and Governor Scott has appointed 27 members to FCCs across the state.
- ❖ Area FCCs held regularly scheduled, advertised, monthly meetings averaging 10 meetings per year for each council, as required by Section 393.502, F.S. and Florida Sunshine laws.
- ❖ Area FCC meeting agenda examples include: FCC business items, budgetary issues, by-law reviews and updates, action/support plan items, and APD updates by regional APD staff. Meeting agendas also cover topics that include current issues and needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, and planning for outreach, education, resources, legislation, and employment issues.

Area FCC Activities and Accomplishments

- Visited with Legislators in their home offices, at local delegation meetings and in Tallahassee at Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day. Developed and supported legislative platforms for issues affecting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Facilitated procurement of individual stories for the FCC community booklet distributed to all legislators and for community education and outreach.
- FCCF provided each council copies of “Apple Bites: Commonsense Disability Strategies for Everyone “.
- Hosted local family forums and conferences with a diverse agenda of topics for education and outreach to individuals and families. Resource fairs were held and APD waiting list, housing, employment/benefits, Social Security, ESE & EES-Transition, iBudget, guardianship, wills and trusts, Disability is Natural, and behavioral issues were among the top agenda items. Several councils collaborated with local organizations for community events on pertinent issues.
- FCCF created a new website to better connect and share information with families across the state. FCCs also cultivated mailing and email lists for broader distribution and outreach.
- Multiple FCC members from around the state attended the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) State Plan meeting and participated in the creation of their five year plan.
- Participated in APD, FDDC, Agency for Health Care Administration, Children Medical Services and other related workgroups, focus group surveys, iBudget Handbook rule hearings, weekly Family Café legislation calls, and workshops held throughout the year.
- Sponsored or attended various conferences and events regarding Housing Coalition, VISIONS, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), Arc Conference, Autism, Down Syndrome, Managed Care, Special Olympics, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS), Easter Seals, Superintendent’s District Advisory Panel, Family Community Involvement Advisory Council (FCIA), meetings held by DD stakeholder organizations such as Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (FARF), Family Network on Disabilities (FND), The Arc of Florida, the 2015 Justice Summit, Youth Summit, SNAC, Disability Mentoring Day, Disability Awareness Month, Department of Elder Affairs’ No Wrong Door Initiative, Americans with Disabilities Act celebrations, Life Access, Sumter/Lake Delegate Days, Florida Disabled Outdoors Association SportsAbility events, Center for Autism and Related Disorders, FDDC participating in activities, and workshops.
- Served on the Delmarva Quality Council and local active Quality Steering committees.
- Sponsored 116 families to attend Family Café conference. FCC members also attended, with several FCC members assisting with the FCCF exhibit. A few members assisted with Café registration and other activities as well.
- FCCF received approximately 145 calls (via the FCCF maintained toll free number) from persons requesting information, resources or other issues. Local council members connected with callers to provide guidance, education, and resources from their local areas.

- Members are active with Department of Education Exceptional Student Education Parent Stakeholder committee, PTI CFPC, and COPAA Council for Parents, Advocates, and Attorneys. Provides webinar training to support and educate parents, Medicaid waiver coordinators, and guardian advocates.
- Purchased equipment for local APD office to assist with mailings going out into the community.
- Received many calls and emails from individuals, family members, community organizations, healthcare offices and others with questions about services and supports available for families, waiting list and waiver issues, and community resources available or needed. Information and referrals made as indicated.

Outreach by Area FCC's

- Articles in local newspapers; Facebook and other social media set up with postings; brochures or articles posted on local community and office bulletin boards; fact sheets prepared and circulated; local website and resource libraries developed and updated.
- Distributed FCCF and APD brochures. Several local councils also designed and distributed local-specific FCC Brochures.
- Attended and participated at APD trainings and APD provider and waiver support coordinator meetings.
- Promoted and encouraged the organization of support groups and participation with self-advocacy groups such as Florida Self-Advocate Network'D (FL SAND). Local members assist Consumer Direct Care Plus (CDC+) support groups in several APD/FCC areas.



Hayden Chadwell, Duval County

Hayden Brooks Chadwell is a medically fragile 4 year old who amazes us, and everyone around us, with his smile and perseverance. His diagnoses are many, the struggles are ongoing and hard, but I must assure you, he is a happy little boy. He is loved by many and enjoys his furry babies, music, wind, his big brother, and singing! The photo is from our first family vacation to Rish Park! Everything was so clean and accessible; the cabins, beach, and pool! We made many wonderful memories and hope to enjoy Rish Park again soon.

Elizabeth O'Bannon, Duval County

I am Liz. I love to visit my family and spend time with them. I also enjoy taking pictures and sharing them with my friends. My dad passed away and because my mom is living in an assisted living facility, I did not know what to do. I was staying with different family members and was very anxious every day. In November 2014, I was accepted into the Medicaid waiver program and started receiving supported living coaching and personal supports. With these services, the dream of living independently is a reality for my family and me.

I now live in a beautiful apartment with my dog, Corky, my new roommate and her cat, Miss Penny. My coach teaches me to do things safely to maintain my apartment, manage my finances, and medical needs. We plan parties and vacations and I enjoy learning to cook my own meals. I am very adventurous and like to stay very busy. My personal support staff helps me schedule my activities, such as, Monday night bingo at the community center, outings with friends, church, and bible study. Since I am Christian, this is very important to me. I take transportation to a local nursing home twice a week to volunteer. It is fun and I love talking with the sweet people who live there and helping them too.



Adam Johnson, Lee County

My name is Adam Johnson. I am 9 years old. I have three brothers and one sister. I am living with intellectual disability. I am learning to read in my second year of home school. I like to go fishing and to the park; sometimes my respite worker takes me to these places. I play baseball with Challenger League and I bowl with Special Olympics. I go to church on Sundays and love praise and worship. I recently got a black labrador retriever; we call her Gypsy. She goes many places with me. My favorite color is red. I love red fire trucks and I want to be a firefighter when I grow up.



Richard Johnson, Jr., Lee County

My name is Richard Dale Johnson, Jr., but I insist you call me Ricky. I am the oldest of five children. I have three brothers and a sister. I am living with autism, but I am a very happy boy. I started my first year as a home school student. I love Jesus and Jesus music. I go to church on Sunday and youth group Sunday night. I really enjoy playing sports. I play baseball with the



Challenger League team. During the summer, I bowl through the kids bowl free program. I also bowl with Special Olympics. I am thinking of trying out tennis with Special Olympics. I also enjoy Monster trucks, I love the Jolly Sisters from Naples; they drive Monster Mutt and 199. I have a collection of monster trucks. I love animals, especially cats, ferrets, and fish. I have a few as pets and I help take care of them. I like garbage trucks. I like to take pictures of the trucks on trash day. When I grow up, I want to work for Waste Pro driving a garbage truck, and I want to work in a pet store selling fish.

Tina Eschner, Pinellas County

My name is Tina Eschner. I am 53 years old from Brooklyn, New York but I have lived in Florida most of my life. I no longer have any living family members in Florida to care for me and I am currently on the Medicaid waiver. I work five days a week at Goodwill. I love my job and my co-workers. We often get together for outings. I like dancing, karaoke, singing and kayaking and do it every chance I get. I also attend church regularly. I am the official greeter every Sunday at my church. Other activities I enjoy are coloring, going for walks and feeding the squirrels and blue jays peanuts. I really like talking and helping others. This year I am choosing to save up to attend camp with my friend instead of participating in many of the



activities I have enjoyed in the past because I cannot afford to do it all. Because of my Medicaid waiver services, I have staff that assist me with budgeting to pay my living expenses. Recently due to a medical issue, I ended up in an assisted living facility (ALF), not of my choosing. My current staff assisted me with moving back into the community by helping me get proper medical attention. As a result, I have my own place and am productive again. I am so grateful for my services and hope Florida continues to provide services to people like me so we can have a happy and meaningful life.

Kim Austin, Pinellas County



My name is Kim Austin. I like needlepoint. I like crafts sometimes. I currently work two jobs, one at PARC and the other Goodwill. I live independently and have a roommate. We both have Medicaid waiver services. We have a lady who assists with our grocery shopping, meal preparation, and with chores which allows us to live independently. My roommate and I enjoy discovering new restaurants and community activities with staff. These activities include bus training and volunteering at the local library. Currently I am in an acting class put on by the City of Saint Petersburg's therapeutic recreation department that my staff helped me find and participate in. I love my mom very much. She

recently went in to an adult congregate living facility (ACLF) and I am still able to see her every weekend. This was all done with the help of my good staff. It is very hard to find good staff and to keep them. This has been a big problem in the past and I feel good that I have been able to find a good staff for now. I would like to see funding enhanced to ensure that Florida could provide me with excellent staff by giving them a livable wage.

Karen Connelly, Pinellas County

My name is Karen Connelly and I moved to Florida from Pittsburg, Pennsylvania with my parents many years ago. They have since passed away. I still have some living siblings but they live in other states. I love to paint fish and birds. I go to Creative Clay which is an adult day training program for artists. I have a job at Goodwill, which allows me to afford arts and crafts, dining out with my friends at new restaurants, community outings, and trips. One of the things I love most is going to Quest's Camp Thunderbird where I meet counselors from around the world. I enjoy being out in the woods doing arts and crafts with them. I also am on a national bowling league that allows me to participate in Special Olympics with my best friend Keith. Someday I would like to go to state competition. I lead a very full and well-rounded life thanks to the services I receive. They allow me to rent a house out in the community with my friend Kim. I am also a very active governor-appointed Family Care Council member. As a registered voter of Florida, I value my freedom of choice. I would like to see many qualified providers be well trained and paid a reasonable wage.



Candice Rodriguez, Pinellas County

I'm Candice Delight Rodriguez. Things I Love: Eating, music, dancing, playing, and joking around. I have been told I have a great sense of humor! I am 23 years old, and I was born with Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS). Throughout my life, I have been in and out of hospitals because of illnesses and surgeries. I need 24-



hour supervision and assistance with just about everything. Those who care for me learn how I communicate. For example, I will grab a spoon if I am hungry, or grab my caregiver's hand towards the radio to turn it on, if I cannot figure it out myself. I need numerous medical supplies for my daily care. I see lots of medical specialists.

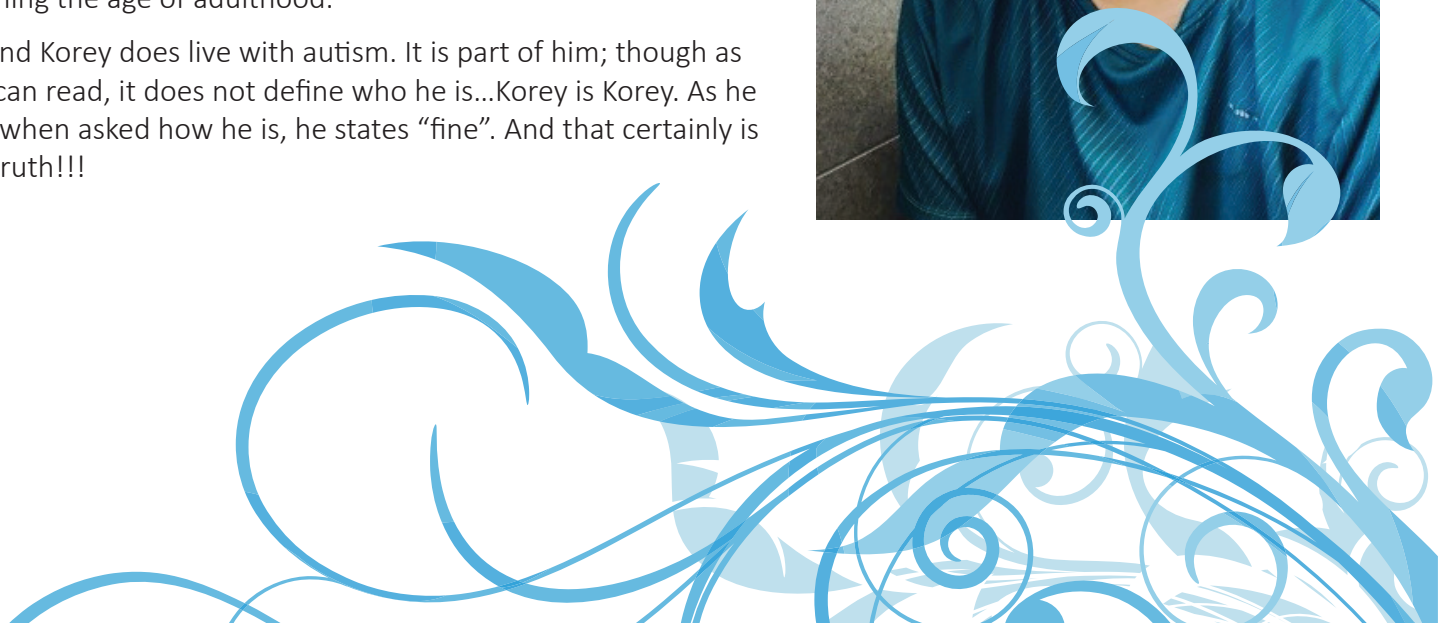
I recently graduated high school so I have more time at home, but need more caregiver services so mom can work. My mom is a single mom of three children; I have a younger brother, and sister. Mom says, "I am blessed to have such a wonderful family", and we all love each other very much. My family's love and support keeps me going every day,

and they make me feel safe and happy. Thanks to the Medicaid waiver, I have a caregiver whom I enjoy having around and other services and supplies that Medicaid insurance will not cover.

Korey Huscher, Hernando County

Korey Huscher, 23, enjoys living with friends, in Hernando County! He loves kidding and goofing around with his sister and friends. McDonalds is the best place to eat. Shopping and going to movies are a lot of fun. Though born in South Korea, he is a true Floridian with a soft spot in his heart for Long Island, New York. He was on the waiting list for more than five years before he began receiving Medicaid waiver services. Because of services, especially behavioral, he has become so much more self-reliant, independent, part of the community. With assistance, he has become more independent with activities of daily living. He is eager to find some kind of work, either volunteer or paid. He also is fond of the opposite sex, especially blondes! He has participated in the honor of voting, making his choices count, every year since reaching the age of adulthood.

Oh and Korey does live with autism. It is part of him; though as you can read, it does not define who he is...Korey is Korey. As he says when asked how he is, he states "fine". And that certainly is the truth!!!



Sara Brothers, Seminole County

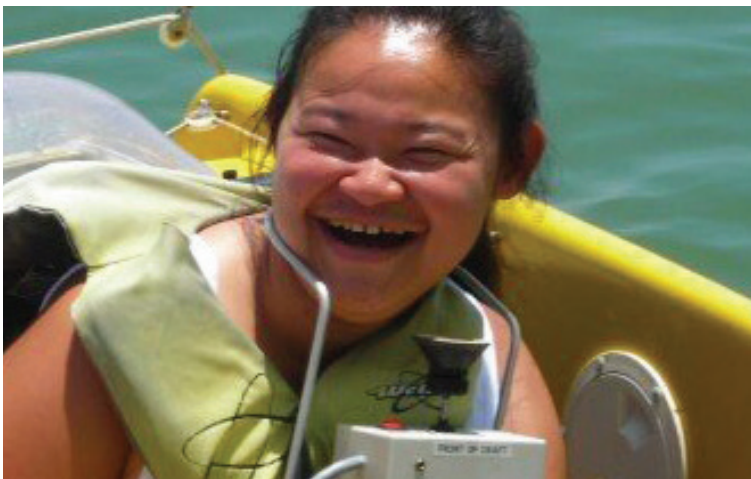
Hi, I am Sara Brothers, better known as Sara B. I was born in 1969 in the wonderful sunshine state, Florida. I have cerebral palsy and I communicate with an augmentative communication device. I traveled up and down the eastern United States giving speeches. I have been on many different panels of discussions and boards of directors, been in a play, and I was on the honor roll though junior high school and high school. After graduation in 1989, I continued to use Sara B, with a little dancing bee, as my logo for my business cards. I started my own small business of handmade wreathes and crafts and desktop printing (flyers, Christmas letters, banners, etc.).



I have been involved with A.B.S. Guide Dogs, training Topaz, my golden retriever, to be a service dog. Topaz was born November 27, 1998. I learned how to be a trainer so I can help others to train their dogs. I am still helping A.B.S. Guide Dogs. In late 2013, I decided to change to a new line of work, data entry, which I can keep schedules for small businesses, and mixing in desktop printing. This way I could do almost everything by myself, putting my computer and my skills to my advantage. Over the years, I have accomplished many things from living in my own lovely home, to getting my GED, to getting my dependable van, and owning three businesses.

Manyvone Champavannarath, Polk County

My name is Manyvone Champavannarath. I was born with cerebral palsy 41 years ago in Laos. I have five sisters and one brother. A local church sponsored my family and I to come to the United States when I was 6. I graduated from high school with high honors in 1994. After high school, I went straight to college where I graduated with my Associate's Degree in Business Administration in 1999. In March of 1997, I finally was approved to be on the Medicaid waiver program with personal care assistant (PCA) and coaching services. Saturday, August 24 was the day. That was the day I moved in my own place and that was the happiest day of my life!



My first paying job was working for a friend from church who needed help creating and maintaining her high school reunion website and I am still working for her. After that, I worked from home for my previous supported living coach's husband's company doing invoice input. Then, I accepted the position as an Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) AmeriCorps member. When that position was over, I accepted the position with APD as the Family Care Council Liaison and I have been there for three years. Without the Medicaid waiver, I would not be able to have an active life. So I encourage you to support me to continue to have a happy and active life!

Jeremy Brimer, Polk County

My son, Jeremy Brimer, was born in March, 1985. He is currently 30 years old. Jeremy has Down syndrome, but he has never let that keep him from achieving his dreams. He lives in his own apartment and is employed by Publix in their Printing Services department. He enjoys basketball, rollerblading, soccer, and swimming. He is currently taking dancing and martial arts lessons. Jeremy is engaged to his fiancé, Brittnie. They enjoy lots of activities together, especially dancing. Jeremy has been on the waiver waiting list since he was in high school.



Judah Littles, Polk County

Judah is in an inclusive classroom with supports. He plays t-ball, soccer, as well as skateboarding. Judah is very charismatic and has a great sense of humor. He is also a movie buff. Judah wants you to fully fund Florida's Home and Community Based Service iBudget waiver, where there are currently over 21,000 individuals on a waiting list for services.



Judah was born in August, 10 days early. He was born with jaundice and had to spend additional time in the hospital. As time went on, Judah did not make many of his developmental milestones. At age 2, Judah was diagnosed with autism. Judah continues to grow and develop. With your support, we want to improve his chances of independent living. The waiver will provide community-based supports that will allow him to live independently.



Brogan Paul, Polk County

Brogan is a happy, spunky, and sassy 7-year old. She is a budding ballerina, gymnast, cheerleader, and is an excited first grader. She was the Tampa Bay Parenting magazine “cover kid” in July 2012, and was cast in the Lakeland Community Theater 2014 production of The Little Mermaid Jr. Brogan walked the runway for GAP in the back-to-school launch of Ellen DeGeneres new limited edition kid’s line and has just signed with a modeling agent.

Brogan was diagnosed at birth with Down syndrome; we contacted our local Early Steps before we were discharged from the hospital. Brogan has benefited from early intervention, physical, occupational and speech therapy, amazing teachers and a strong community support system. We encourage Brogan to participate in everything that her interests and abilities allow.



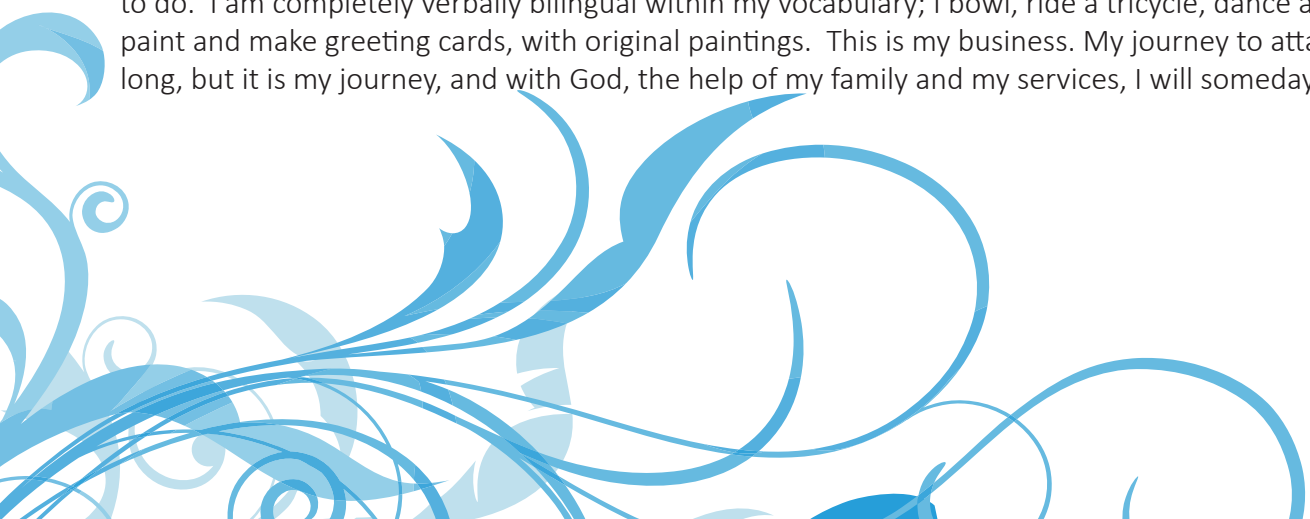
Cristina Pacheco, Broward County

I am Cristina Pacheco, a happy person with many attributes, just one being that I have some neurological dysfunctions. I am fortunate to benefit from services that enhance my life and affords me possibilities otherwise difficult or impossible to enjoy. Some of my positive qualities are that I have a beautiful smile, I am



a gregarious person, I love to learn, cook, paint, the theater, the beach, and I simply love music, from classical to children’s music and Bible songs. I act with the Exceptional Theater Company. I recently participated with other there in making a video with the Maccabi Arts Festival group. The picture here was taken after the video was filmed. I also attend an adult day training program which is very good. I have friends, I learn much, and it also gives my mother, who is the person that looks after me, an opportunity to breathe and complete some of her many tasks. Though I can also be difficult and stubborn, I am proud to say, I have improved much. A behavior therapist has been working with me on my behavior issues and has noticed the difference it makes to have some physical and spatial input before beginning any task. This is an autistic characteristic. I have a much better life now, and someday, hopefully soon, I will be a tax payer, instead of a tax recipient. Thanks to all the therapies my family

provided and all the work they did with me. I walk and talk, something the experts thought I would not be able to do. I am completely verbally bilingual within my vocabulary; I bowl, ride a tricycle, dance and swim a little. I paint and make greeting cards, with original paintings. This is my business. My journey to attain my goals will be long, but it is my journey, and with God, the help of my family and my services, I will someday be a tax payer.



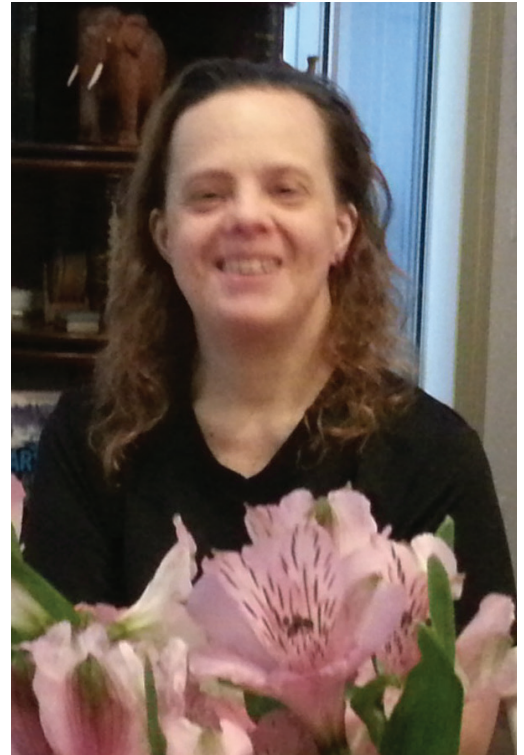
Polly Oberg, Palm Beach County

My name is Polly Oberg. This is my birthday picture. I had 18 friends, family, and staff at my parents' home to help me celebrate. Would you believe I'm 52? I'm getting old, but my parents are much older. I have worked at a regular job, no supports needed, for over 20 years, except my parents, who drove me to and from work every day. I am, in part, on my own Social Security benefits which I have paid into for all those years. I'm also proud to say I paid my taxes and I vote.

For the last eight years, I have volunteered at Coral Reef Elementary School. I didn't get paid but I love working with children.

I didn't need to be on waiver support services until last year. My father was very ill and my mother had to spend most of the year at the hospital and nursing home to help him. I was home alone a lot then; I missed my friends. Because my father was so ill, I was admitted into the waiver program under the crisis category for aging parents. I live in a nice group home now. I still visit my parents at their home but it's kind of quiet and boring. I look forward to going back to my new home, with my new friends and family. I have a job that I love and I get a pay check again which makes me proud. I have worked on my feet, six hours a day for 30 years. My foot hurts (I have arthritis) and I get tired more easily now. I can still work but I need to sit down if I'm tired so I work with staff who understands my needs. I am lucky to receive the services that allow me to be safe, happy, and still participate in the community and Special Olympics. Did I tell you that I have international gold medals in gymnastics and state golds in swimming, horseback riding, skiing, skating, weight lifting, and a few more sports? Just because I have Down syndrome, I have never let anything stop me from achieving my goals.

My parents are relieved that I have adjusted to my new life so well and that they do not have to worry about me anymore. Please continue to help other parents have the same peace of mind as they age. It means everything to them. Thank you for your continued support of the iBudget waiver.



Aaron Lee Coleman, Martin County



My name is Aaron Lee Coleman. I am 30 years old and live in Hobe Sound, in my own place since March 21, 2015. I was on the waiting list for 10 years and just got approved for services. I work part time, six hours a week, at Treasure Coast Harley Davidson. I do have experience working full time at Walgreens Distribution Center for two years and would like to work full time again. I am currently working on my application to attend Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Community Inclusion Academy with great hopes of being accepted into this program. I need continuing education to retain and learn more about living on my own and sustaining a full time job. If accepted, the FAU program will give me that opportunity. I am the founding President of a self-advocate group called Stand Up for Independence (SUFI) and a previous Director of Florida Self-Advocates Networked (FL SAND), and now am a Board Advisor. I participate in the Employ Me 1st advisory group through the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council. I am an Athlete Leader in Special Olympics. My girlfriend Jaime is now doing Special Olympics too. I attend as many conferences so I can learn about rights for people with disabilities. Please consider issues that hinder me from reaching my fullest potential. They are transportation, continued

education, and employment. I would also like to someday get married and not lose part of my benefits by doing so.

Drew Maxwell, Polk County

Drew Maxwell is a 16-year old living with severe autism. He was diagnosed when he was two and a half. We started intense one-on-one behavioral therapy and introduced him to the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) since he was non-verbal. He has been involved in social outings such as surfing for autism, autism walks, special needs swim team, community outings, and attended an autism program. Drew has been homeschooled for the past two years working on life skills and becoming more independent. Drew enjoys theme parks, including roller coasters. He loves to watch movies on his iPad and YouTube videos. He enjoys all types of food from fine dining to McDonalds, and of course, dessert. He also loves water parks, hot tubs, and staying at hotels. Drew is usually smiling and is always ready to give a hug to anyone.





