

# Self Advocates Becoming Empowered

JUNE 2018

SABE CONFERENCE EDITION

## Note from Tia Nelis, President of SABE



What has SABE done in the past 4 years? Many inspiring events have happened for SABE these past years I have served as President.

We were awarded a Project of National Significant (PNS) grant from the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD). The name of the Project is Self Advocacy Technical Assistance Center otherwise known as **SARTAC**. We have created a website that has all kinds of resources for

people with disabilities and self advocacy groups. Check it out

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

We have meet with the Executive Directors and staff from the DD Network to see how they can support the self advocacy movement. Ask yourself this, "How can the DD Network help?"

When tragedies and disasters occurred Nationally, SABE was happy and proud to support and donate money to states in need. We dedicated money to help self advocacy groups keep in touch and to aid self advocates in their state.

We have continuously educated legislators when the opportunity strikes, especially on Medicaid issues, and it has been many times lately. People still need to share their stories about why services are important to them and why they should not be cut. Self Advocates and Allies from TASH and SABE have participated in rallies and even spent the night on the capitol lawn to fight for our rights.



# 2018 SABE Conference

LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN!  
DISABILITY RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS

## SABE Executive Committee

**Tia Nelis, President**

Illinois, Region 5

**Cathy Enfield, Vice President**

Missouri, Region 4

**Chaqueta Stuckey, Secretary**

South Carolina, Region 6

**Ryan Duncanwood, Treasurer**

California, Region 2

**Darren Morris, Sergeant At Arms**

Alabama, Region 6

## SABE Board Members

Region 1

**Jason Billehus, Montana**

Region 2

**John Britton, Arizona**

Region 3

**Vicki Wray, Colorado**

Region 4

**Joan Schiele, North Dakota**

Region 5

**Carrie Varner, Minnesota**

Region 7

**Gary Rubin, New Jersey**

Region 8

**Anne Fracht (MA) &**

**Eric McVay (ME)**

Region 9

**Dee Banta, Oklahoma**

## Color Communication Badges

are a system which were first developed in Autistic spaces and conferences. They help people tell everyone who can see their badge about their communication preferences. The card that is currently visible is the active card; the other two are hidden behind the first one, accessible to the person if they should need them.

A **green** badge means that the person is actively seeking communication; they have trouble initiating conversations, but want to be approached by people who are interested in talking.

A **yellow** badge means that the person only wants to talk to people they recognize, not by strangers or people they only know from the Internet. The badge-wearer might approach strangers to talk, and that is okay; the approached people are welcome to talk back to them in that case. But unless you have already met the person face-to-face, you should not approach them to talk.

A **red** badge means that the person probably does not want to talk to anyone, or only wants to talk to a few people. The person might approach others to talk, and that is okay; the approached people are welcome to talk back **GREEN YELLOW RED** to them in that case. But unless you have been told already by the badge-wearer that you are on their "red list", you should not approach them to talk.

# Exciting NEWS!

## My Technology Handbook 2 Update!

Both books answer questions that most of us who are new or just learning about technology. They provide answers to many questions by using step by step direction and how to videos to learn these skills. To view the current videos go to: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHe4SX3HJvylsmeJOu\\_jsTrcVwpbh20M](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHe4SX3HJvylsmeJOu_jsTrcVwpbh20M)

### My Technology Handbook 2 topics include:

- **Access to Technology**—The chapter will talk about how to access technology and how to use it.
- **Internet Safety**—This chapter will talk about how to protect yourself on the internet and how to search for information on-line.
- **How to use Technology in your home**—This chapter will talk about how to manage your home using technology.
- **Using social media**—This chapter will talk about how to use social media to talk about your self advocacy group.



The SABE **My Technology Handbook 2** is made possible through a grant by the Coleman Institute.



Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilities  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Boulder | Colorado Springs | Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

# Spotlight Self-Advocates

By Carrie Varner



## Where do you see SABE in 5 years?

I see more people getting involved and joining the Self Advocacy movement. By getting more people involved, we can get more things done.

## What advice can you give to those new to the self advocacy movement?

Be patient. It takes time when you are learning new things like:

- How to be a good leader
- How to be part of a group
- How to get involved where you live
- How systems work
- And my favorite, how to vote

## Where do you see yourself as a self-advocate in 5 years?

Even though my term is about to end, I will still volunteer with SABE projects. I will keep working on the employment project and on the SABE GoVoter Project.

## When you're not doing self advocacy work, what do you like to do?

I like to go on a roll about town and take my fiancé on a dinner date. Tell people about my job at Target. I have worked there for over 18 years.

John Britton, Region 2 representative. I live in Arizona. My region includes: California, Hawaii, and Nevada.

## How long have you been a self advocate?

I've been a self advocate my whole life! I gave my mom and sisters a hard time. I always asked for what I wanted. That was my job! But seriously, I got involved with People First of Illinois in the mid-1990s.

## What is the biggest issue for self advocates?

The issues are Medicaid and transportation for self advocates in our People First of Arizona group.

# Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center

## “Self-Advocacy and Beyond!”

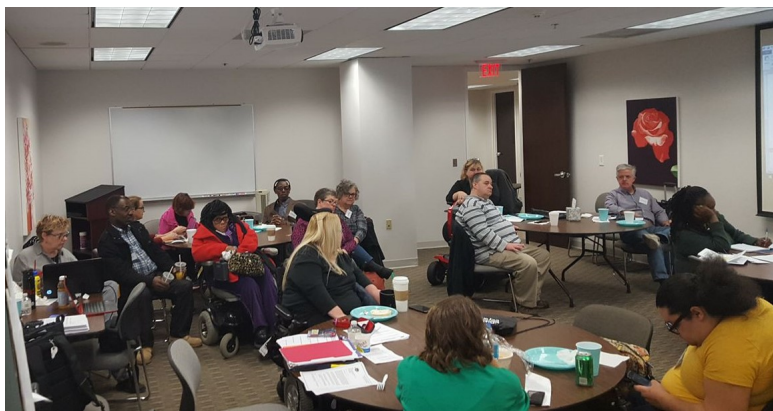


Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (**SARTAC**). The resource center is funded for five years as a **Project of National Significance** from the **Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities** under the **Administration on Disabilities**. To learn more about our funder go to [www.acl.gov](http://www.acl.gov)

### What is the mission of SARTAC?

It has been SABE's vision to be recognized as the national **“GO TO”** resource for self advocacy. SARTAC is the first step of our vision. The mission of SARTAC is to strengthen the self advocacy movement by supporting self advocacy organizations to grow in diversity and leadership.

### What are the activities of the Center?



~Create and manage a website where self advocates can learn about the best ways to organize and support the self advocacy community

~Use social media like Facebook and Twitter to communicate with the self advocacy community

~Share best practice tools created by the Regional Self Advocacy Technical

Assistance Centers and by self advocacy organizations and allies from across the nation

~Work with a 12 person Advisory Committee to review and create self advocacy information and a Think Tank

~Share the history of the self advocacy movement

~Share the self advocacy and civil rights leaders about the same or differences about our struggles for our rights

~Share success stories in self advocacy through webinars and video blogs

~Provide training and assistance to local, self advocacy organizations and partners

~Provide a planning grant for the state organization who hosts the 2018 and 2020 SABE conference

~Provide 24 self advocates with policy and leadership fellow opportunities

### How is SARTAC managed?

The Center's Management Team is lead by SABE and includes partnerships with: ASAN, GSMA, SWI, TASH, and UMKC.

For more information about the project, contact Teresa Moore, Director 602-725-3117 or Vicki Hicks-Turnage [sabe.SARTACinfo@gmail.com](mailto:sabe.SARTACinfo@gmail.com)

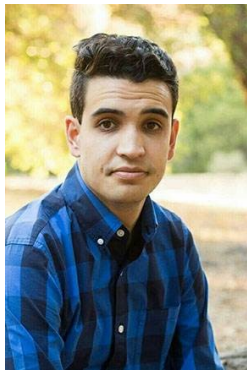
Also Like us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Self-Advocacy-Resource-and-Technical-Assistance-Center-SARTAC/>

# Welcome the 2018 SARTAC Fellows



The Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) is a project of SABE. We are excited to announce the 2018 Policy and Leadership Fellows. SARTAC and the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) have provided this leadership opportunity for self advocates. Meet the 6 new fellows and their host organizations. Learn about how they will help the self advocacy movement.

**Meet Fellow: Samuel Capozzi** from California



**His Host Organization:** Autism and Communication Center At California Lutheran University

**The Project:** Point Of Access: Accessing Communication, Higher Education, And Community For Non-speaking Individuals On The Autism Spectrum Who Use AAC (Augmentative And Alternative Communication). Do you or a friend use a communication board? Check this project out.

**Meet Fellow: Thomas Caswell** from Vermont



**His Host Organization:** Champlain Community Services

**The Project:** "I know who I am and I feel welcome!" Learn from self advocates who are LGBTQ and autistic how our self advocacy groups can be more welcoming. Does your group have goals to increase membership? Does your membership plan include being culturally diverse?

**Meet Fellow: Kelsey Cowley** from Indiana



**Her Host Organization:** Self-Advocates of Indiana

**The Project:** Developing a peer-to-peer training model to provide education on healthy relationships, sexuality, and sexual violence prevention. Do you like share your experiences and training to help other advocates stop abuse?

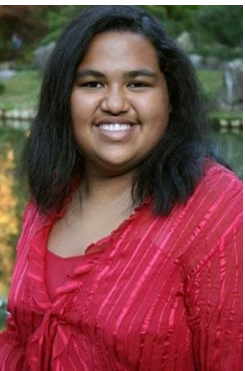
# Meet the rest of the 2018 SARTAC Fellows



**Meet Fellow: Kevin Greenstein** from New York

**His Host Organization:** Self Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS)

**The Project:** Invisible No More - Using Strong Relationships to Improve Policy. The project will write a Handbook that will teach self advocates on how to work on issues with elected officials that help their community. Does your group use role play to get ready for important meetings?



**Meet Fellow: Sorretie Jaro** from Washington

**Her Host Organization:** Washington State Office of Developmental Disabilities Ombuds

**The Project:** Empowering Legislative Advocates Through Video. The project will teach self advocates how to research bills on important issues. One of the activities will be to create a guild on how to make a video to send to legislators. Would you like to tell your legislators how you feel about issues?



**Meet Fellow: Nicole LeBlanc** from Maryland

**Her Host Organization:** National Disability Rights Network

**The Project:** A Toolkit for self-advocates on the importance of competitive employment laws. The project will also create fact sheets for legislators about employment for people with disabilities. Have you heard of Employment First in your state? Tell people why you want a real job. Are there rules getting in your way?

**Do you have a great idea? At the end of 2018, we will announce the next fellowship opportunity for 2019. If you have questions, get in touch with Teresa Moore at [mooreadvocacy@hotmail.com](mailto:mooreadvocacy@hotmail.com)**

# Congratulations to the 2017 SARTAC Fellows

The Self Advocacy Resource and Technical Assistance Center (SARTAC) and SABLE are excited to that we could offer this opportunity for the 2017 Policy and Leadership Fellows to share their completed projects with you. SARTAC and AIDD were able to promote the work of self advocates from across the country who participated in this leadership opportunity. Learn more about their projects.



**Meet Fellow: Marie Malinowski** from New York

**Her Host organization:** Self-Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS)

**The Project:** A Path to Power: Self Advocates as Community Organizers to Enhance Human Rights. Marie has created handouts and videos about community organizing.



**Meet Fellow: Steven Powe** from Washington, D.C.

**His Host organization:** Project ACTION!

**The Project:** Preparing Self-Advocates to Serve on Human Rights Committees. Steven has met with different human rights communities and created tools for them to be more inviting to self advocates.



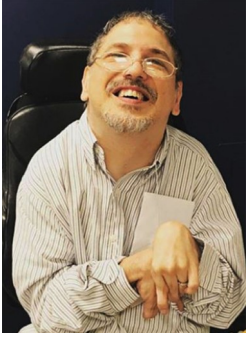
**Meet Fellow: Danielle McGill** from Florida

**Her Host organization:** Ann Storck Center, Inc.

**The Project:** "A-Ride-Away": Increasing awareness of the transportations needs for people with disabilities with policy recommendations through a guide for self advocates, educators, and community members. Danielle created A-Ride-Away Guide and has a Facebook page with videos and blogs about her experiences. It also has tours of some of the transportation stations in Florida.



# Celebrate with the rest of the 2017 SARTAC Fellows



**Meet Fellow: Bob Peterson** from Illinois

**His Host organization:** University of Illinois-Chicago (Institute on Disability and Human Development)

**The Project:** Advocating for More Flexible Self-Directed Services and Hosts to Promote Employment. Bob has interviewed stakeholders on employment. He will have resources to share about his experiences.



**Meet Fellow: Cole Browne** from Kansas

**His Host organization:** Cole will be a Fellow at Self-Advocate Coalition of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas

**The Project:** Raising the Heat Self-Advocate Style: Using the principles of the Kansas Leadership Center to provide self advocates with leadership tools. Cole's tools will help you learn in a friendly way.



**Meet Fellow: Shiloh Blackburn** from Idaho

**Her Host organization:** University of Idaho Center on Disabilities and Human Development

**The Project:** Developing Accessible Online Leadership Trainings and Resources. Shiloh will share her resources and how she trained and modified the materials.

SABE and communities around the country owe each of you a tremendous thank you. Your projects provide us with experiences mixed with your creative vision of how you would improve self advocacy. Each project was made possible with the support of your host organizations and their incredible staff. The tools you have provided will serve as a path to success for current and future self advocates. They are available on the SARTAC website <http://selfadvocacyinfo.org> Our greatest hope lies with your endeavors in employment, leadership, and policy development.

## Congratulations!

# The Importance of Completing the SABE Voter Experience Survey

Self advocacy groups have been telling us they are worried about their services being cut.

They ask SABE, “What can we do?” We know the way Americans get their voices heard is by **voting**. That is why the SABE GoVoter Project works so hard to learn about **YOUR** voting experience. By completing the survey, we can share your comments with election officials.

A successful voting experience is a shared one. If everyone does their part, our right to an independent and private vote will result.

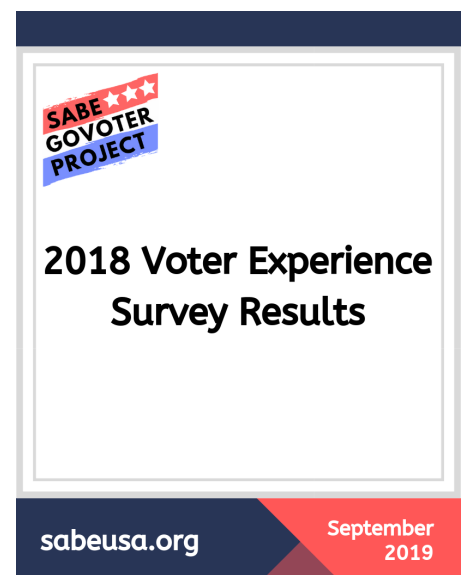
- **Voters** must be prepared
- **Local** and **State Election Officials** must make voting accessible and safe
- **Law makers** must pass legislation and guidelines that protect our right

What makes the SABE survey

different is that it collects first-hand feedback directly from you, the **voter with disabilities**. The SABE GoVoter Project works with state P&As and Self Advocacy groups to collect Voters with Disabilities Experience Surveys.

We cannot expect legislators to know what are needs and problems unless we tell them. When you complete this survey, you are telling them what they need to know about the voting process for person with a disability.

The **more** completed surveys we collect, the **better** the Report will be, and the more that election official will **listen** to us and **take action**.





## Tell Your Story About Voting with a Guardian

Are you under guardianship and not legally allowed to vote, but wish you could? Are you under guardianship and able to vote legally, but had to get special permission from a judge?

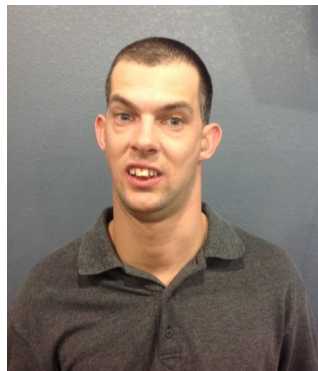
People need to hear about your challenges. Leif Greiss, a reporter from **WhoWhatWhy** is working with SABE GoVoter to collect personal stories. Please contact him by July 20, 2018 at [leif.greiss@gmail.com](mailto:leif.greiss@gmail.com) or 484-602-5790

### And the Winners Are!

The SABE GoVoter Project recognizes self advocates from the states of Florida, Illinois and North Carolina. They collected the most Voters with Disabilities Experience Surveys for the 2016 Election.

These individuals earned free registration to the 2018 SABE National Conference for their hard work and commitment to making sure voters with disabilities have a good voting experience. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to voting. And, thank you to self advocates across the nation who completed the survey.

David Taylor, Jr., NC



Arizona Jenkins, III, FL



Derrick Morris, IL



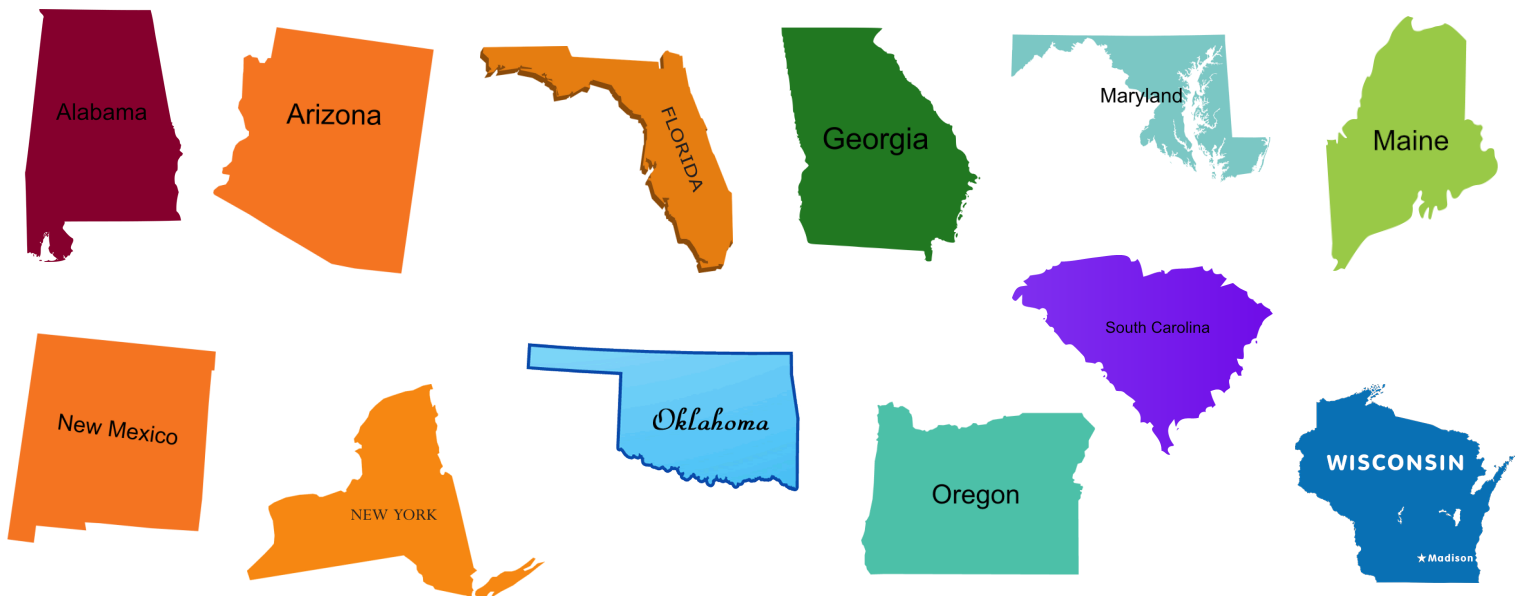
# SABE GoVoter Project

This year, Arkansas, California, and Indiana self advocacy groups and P&A are working together. They participated in the SABE GoVoter SABE Voter Project “**How to Get Best Out of Your Voter Project Training!**” webinar series. In the next newsletter we will share the activities they did with voters with disabilities in their state.



You may have done the vote training with SABE in the past. SABE now offers it online with updated materials. If you have more than one P&A office in your state, we would like for you to have you apply next year. Interested?  
Email Teresa Moore at [mooreadvocacy@hotmail.com](mailto:mooreadvocacy@hotmail.com).

Theses are the states that have completed the SABE GoVoter Distance training:



**Would you would to help SABE collect surveys in your state?**

**Contact**

**Essie Pederson at [essiepederson@gmail.com](mailto:essiepederson@gmail.com)**

**Are you registered to Vote?**

**Remember to Vote on November 6, 2018!**

**Complete the 2018 Voters with Disabilities Experience Surveys after the November 6, 2018 Election to make sure your experience is included in the SABE Report.**

# SABE Collaborates with UMass-Boston ICI: What is Employment First?

Members from SABE, Jason Billehus, John Britton, and Max Barrow with supports from Juliana Huereña and Karen Topper meet monthly.

**The Truth Comes from Us**, Employment professionals play a powerful role in the pursuit of true inclusion. This paper by self-advocates outlines key steps on how allies can move people with developmental disabilities out of poverty and into the heart of our communities. As employment professionals receive more education, they will be in a better position to empower the people they support to pursue their dream careers.

### The Truth Comes From Us

Supporting Workers with Developmental Disabilities

By Max Barrow, Jason Billehus, John Britton, Allison Cohen Hall, Melissa Floerke, Nicole Ledem, Eric McKay, and Karen Topper



Employment professionals play a powerful role in the pursuit of true inclusion. This paper by self-advocates outlines key steps on how allies can move people with developmental disabilities out of poverty and into the heart of our communities.

**SELF-ADVOCATES BECOMING EMPOWERED**

**ThinkWork!**

**On Target by John Britton**

In 2000, I was living on my own with really supportive personal assistants coming in the mornings and evenings. But I just lost my job that a high school teacher had helped me get at an attorney's office. What to do next? I shopped at Target all the time. I like to help people and thought it would be a good place to work. My parents were worried and said, "Johnny, I don't know about this one."

Back in those days you asked for an application. The person I asked said, "Who is this for?" I replied, "It's for me." They responded with a puzzled look saying, "Really?" I said, "Yes," and rolled away.

My assistant helped me fill out the application. I turned it in the next day. The person said, "Thank you, we will call you." I called them after a few days. It took a couple of times for them to figure out what I was saying. I would say, "Wait, don't hang up, I want a job." They kept saying the person who hires is not here. I kept asking and got a time to see her.

I went in to see her and she said, "We don't have anything right now." I kept on bugging them. When it came I called. When the weather was nice, I would roll in and ask to see her. If she was busy I would tell them I would shop and wait for her. Then she would say, "Hi John, how you don't stop." I went in about five times over a month. They figured I was not kidding around. They eventually called me for an interview.

I was so excited for the interview. I went with a personal assistant. Like many times in my life, I introduced my assistant saying, "She is here to interpret if you don't understand me. But please, talk to me, not her." She sat in on the interview, but only interpreted when she needed to. The target manager seemed ok with it. She asked me, "what can you do for us?" I answered, "I really target and want to work here. Let me look around and see what I can do and come back to you." We parted positively and with a smile.

Over the next couple of days, I looked around the whole store. When I met with the manager again I said, "I have been looking around and it seems like you need some help keeping the service desk returns picked up. I can put stuff back."

She replied, "Oh, you're right. The 'go-backs' area does get busy and extra help is always needed. Anything else you're thinking about?" I suggested, "What about if I keep things picked up around the store?" I added, "Give me a chance and if I don't do a good job I will roll out of here."

The rest is history. I have been working at Target for 10 years now that includes a move from Illinois to Arizona, where I transferred stores but stayed with the company!

The lessons for employment professionals are: help when asked, and assume I can do it on my own unless I ask for help. I can do my job mostly without supports. I get some help at break-time-to eat lunch or to shop. For the most part, when I need help, I'll just ask a co-worker.

### APSE EMPLOYMENT FIRST STATEMENT

Adapted by Green Mountain Self Advocates and Self Advocates Becoming Empowered

All people with disabilities should have opportunities to work. Public dollars should be used to pay for supports for people to work in the community.

People with disabilities, their families, and their allies believe that:

- Too many people with disabilities do not have a job. This is unacceptable.
- All people should have opportunities for real jobs with real wages. It will get us out of poverty. We will be more independent. We will feel more included.
- All people, with and without disabilities, can work in jobs together earning minimum wage or higher.
- Like everyone else, people with disabilities should have access to supports that they need to work successfully.
- All people, no matter what disability they have, have the right to work a job they choose that matches their skills and interests.
- Public policies must support people with disabilities having real jobs. Money for services should be spent on people having jobs in the community.
- Just calling your state an Employment First state is not enough. "Employment First" is when everyone who wants a job, has a job.

**APSE** **EMSA** **SELF-ADVOCATES BECOMING EMPOWERED** **ThinkWork!** **ICI**

## APSE EMPLOYMENT FIRST STATEMENT,

Adapted by Green Mountain Self Advocates and Self Advocates Becoming Empowered. All people with disabilities should have opportunities to work. Public dollars should be used to pay for supports for people to work in the community. Copy the link to view statement.


**A Purpose in Life: Why Employment First Matters to Self Advocates**, This paper talks about the Employment First movement and what it really means to people with disabilities. People with disabilities told us that they want to work in real jobs for real pay.

### A Purpose in Life: Why Employment First Matters to Self-Advocates

By Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered and Green Mountain Self-Advocates

**INTRODUCTION**

We are seeing a bad employment pattern. Research is saying that the number of people working in sheltered workshops is going down but the number of people working in the community is not getting any bigger. Why? Because instead of working in community employment, many people are moving into day programs. This is not the direction we want to be going in. We need to bring the numbers of people working in the community up! Even though there are new laws limiting the use of sheltered workshops, it is so sad to know that some youth are still placed in sheltered workshops when they could have so many other options. We can do better.




### Explore Work Curriculum

This great resource was created with and for self-advocates in Florida to learn more about employment. Working together they are discovering what it means to work in the community.

The curriculum covers 4 topics:

- Why people work
- How people decide what kind of job they want
- Working with VR and other state agencies that can help you find and maintain work
- Advocating for yourself

You can get a copy at: [www.employmentfirstfl.org/explore-work-curriculum](http://www.employmentfirstfl.org/explore-work-curriculum)



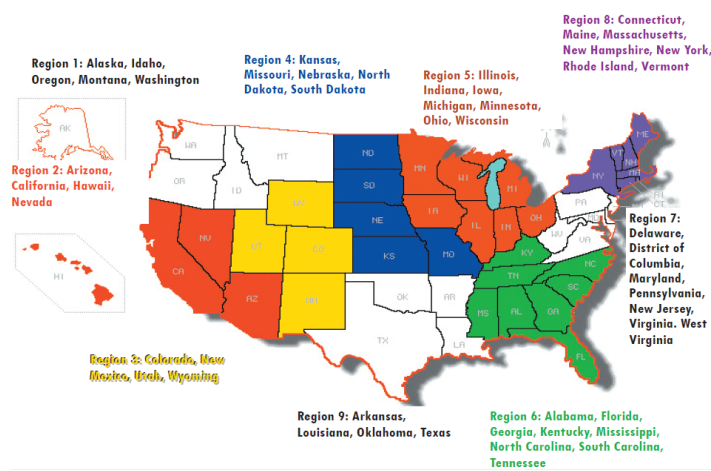
You can read these white papers on the RRTC Employment Project page at [www.sabeusa.org](http://www.sabeusa.org)

# SABE AT WORK!



SABE members in Alabama talking about the 2018 SABE Conference.





## Lunch time on Friday, June 8, 2018

**11:30 AM-1:00 PM**

**Region 1** (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington)

**Location: Room K**

**Region 2** (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands.)

**Location: Room J**

**Region 3** (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming)

**Location: Room D**

**Region 4** (Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota)

**Location: Room L**

**Region 5** (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin)

**Location: Room E**

**Region 6** (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee)

**Location: 1st Floor Ballroom A-B**

**Region 7** (Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Virginia, Washington DC, West Virginia)

**Location: Room O**

**Region 8** (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont)

**Location: Room B**

**Region 9** (Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas)

**Location: Room C**



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## Improving Cultural Diversity in Your Self Advocacy group



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

SABE is in partnership with the Georgetown University Leadership Institute for Cultural Diversity and cultural and Linguistic Competence... a catalyst for change in networks supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities project.

Teresa Coleman currently serving on the SABE Board of Directors and is part of the Grassroots Committee. She is also part of People First of Georgia.

I attended the 2017 Leadership Academy in Santa Fe, New Mexico. At the Academy, I learned how to be a better advocate for my rights and why diversity is so important. Diversity is about culture, language, respect, and celebrating who I am.

As a person with a disability, I want to be treated as equal. I'm working hard to express my thoughts. In the community we need to have better transportation, housing, and work environments. For example, better accessible hotels with automatic doors, curb cuts, and sidewalks. I believe that we are unique. People must come together and fight for fairness. I also believe we should be able to sustain and accomplish more out of our lives. Sure, I am going to need help from others who care about me. But it all starts with me speaking up for myself.

