April is Limb Loss and Limb Difference Awareness Month.

More than 2 million Americans live with limb loss or limb difference, and more than 28 million are at risk of amputation surgery. We want to educate others about what it’s like to live with limb loss. April 11th & 12th will be a virtual Advocacy Forum where you can get involved and make a difference. Attend both days of education and training and become certified as a Lead Advocate. No one should face limb loss alone. Advocates can help support people to recover, readjust and live life fully.

Visit [www.amputee-coalition.org](http://www.amputee-coalition.org)
LOCAL EVENTS - Please join us!

Our events serve as an emotional connection to a shared common experience, and they build stronger, more resilient communities. We have both online and in person events with Social Distancing Precautions in place. Be an active part and join us in our virtual workshops, peer support groups, get togethers, and gaming opportunities. If you are having trouble connecting, have difficulties with high speed internet, or lack the devices that enable you to be an active part, please phone your local CIL. We can help! We love our communities!

Apr 15 - Fitness For All: Paralympic Contribution
12:00 noon - 1:30 pm PST
Washington State University, Pullman

Apr 16 - Disability/Intersectional Virtual Book Club Discussion
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm PST
Bookclub discussion of a collection of essays exploring disability

Apr 21 - 2021 Community Business Fair
4:00 pm - 7:00 pm PST
Post Falls, Idaho

Apr 27 - Reeve Summit 2021
12:00 noon - 7:00 pm EST
Virtual conference relevant to the paralysis community

BINGO BASH!
APRIL 30th 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm PST
Virtual fun!

Join in for some fun! Meet new people, learn about services for people with disabilities and play as many games of Bingo as we can fit in an hour. Prizes awarded to top 3 Bingo winners.

Register by April 23 so you can receive you Bingo cards by mail. Braille cards available for those who need it.
Call 208-457-3891 to hold your spot!
From the Editor

Pronouns may be some of the smallest words in the English language. Looking beyond how well they fare on a triple word score in Scrabble, we can see they are by no means insignificant.

Gender pronouns are words that refer to someone who’s being talked about. They neatly sum up gender identity in a small package. For transgender, non-binary and gender nonconforming people, they represent the key to social acceptance.

They/them/their is probably the most common gender neutral pronoun and can be used in the singular. But how to use gender pronouns the right way in the workplace? The best practice is to behave as though there are transgender, non-binary or gender nonconforming people already there. Although no one is required to discuss their pronouns, employees should feel able to do so if they choose. You can ask new employees which gender pronouns they prefer, or encourage people to include their pronouns during intros.

Start by sharing your own preferred pronouns, and encourage others to follow suit. You can add your gender pronouns to your email signatures and social media.

What if you make a mistake? If you get it wrong, acknowledge it, restate the correct pronoun (Sorry, I meant they) and remember for next time. The most important thing is to show you care about getting it right.

Gender pronouns lie at the root of supporting gender transitions and help create an environment where employees feel safe, comfortable and included. They announce someone’s identity to the world, so getting it right matters.

So stop, take a deep breath and ask. By asking, that will go so far to tell someone you care.

If you have an idea for our newsletter please contact dac@daenw.org.
Video Contest Ends this Month

DAC NW invites you to make a 1-2 minute video about some disability related barrier you have overcome. Grand Prize winner will receive a Kindle Fire HD Tablet, 2nd Place winner a $50 gift card, and 3rd Place winner a $25 gift card. Contest deadline is April 30th.

We live in a great big world and disability is a part of that. Get creative, have fun, learn about what others do and show us the “life hacks” that have helped you in life.

Worried your video skills aren't great enough? Here are some tips that will help you to increase your odds of winning.

Contest Theme: We are looking for ways you navigate the world with a disability. Got a quick tip for someone with your kind of disability? A life hack? A new product? Switch your phone to video and let us know.

Video Length: Don’t worry about filling up time. These videos are short 1-2 minutes. Get creative with music and other effects using your phone or computer movie apps.

Make a Moving Story: Brainstorm ideas to tell your story and connect with the viewer. Humor is a good bet, but you could also tug at the heartstrings, and appeal to the audience’s sense of fairness and courage.

A Strong Hook: Once you have an idea, think about a gripping way to start your video. Don’t be tempted to save your most moving shots for later in the video.

Consider your Setting: Choose a plain backdrop like a white wall or solid colored door. Consider filming outdoors.

Edit your video: You can do a lot of magic in post-production to make your video great. Add music clips, change the coloring, speed up or slow down parts, add text overlays and more. Check out this free How To Edit Video Class.

Then submit!

A panel of judges will select the top 3 videos. To enter submit a 1-2 minute video to a Google Drive account and send us the link to dac@dacnw.org with “What Accessibility Means to Me” in the subject line. Or you can use WeTransfer.com the same way.
The Need for Accessible Websites

As we move through this pandemic, we have realized the importance of accessing information in real time. That information should be provided in different accessible formats to not leave anyone out.

One resource that has added accessible information is the Georgia Tech Microsite which has up to date information about COVID-19. You can access the information via the website or even with American Sign Language Videos. Their goal is to increase access to information. Funding from CDC Foundation made it possible. The resources are adapted and provided through accessible versions depending on your needs.

There is a link to Braille documents that you can download to read. It includes a button for downloading to an embossed braille printer. You can also request braille documents to be mailed to you. Supplies are limited due to finite funding. Documents covering 49 different topics include identifying symptoms of COVID-18, testing, and what to do if your are sick.

Another link has accessible Word documents and PDF’s are compatible with a variety of screen readers and assistive technology that reads text. You simply select the document you want and download the readable version. there are 62 documents to choose from covering how COVID spreads to how it affects people with disabilities. You can find detailed answers about what to expect going back to school, funerals, or attending sports events.

Still another link provides the same information in easy to read, simplified text. These materials adhere to the Guidelines for Minimizing Complexity of Text. It addresses the need for individuals who read and/or listen with an understanding below third-grade level to have equitable access to information. Adults with developmental or intellectual disabilities are the primary audience, but many other individuals may benefit from these materials.

And now there are ASL videos to watch that include closed captioning too. Fourteen different videos cover topics like precautions for older adults, cleaning your home, and caring for someone who is sick with COVID at home.

You can access these at [https://cidi.gatech.edu/covid](https://cidi.gatech.edu/covid)

We would love to see is this kind of accessibility continue into the future for all kinds of information. Website accessibility is important for people with disabilities.

For more information about the ADA contact

NWADACENTER.ORG/IDAHO
Dana Gover, MPA, and ACTCP Certification
ADA Training & Technical Assistance
Email: dananwadacenteridaho@gmail.com
Phone: Voice & TTD 208-841-9422
Lawsuit between Disability Rights Groups and Idaho Legislature Settled.

On March 5, 2021, five disability organizations, and two Idahoans with disabilities, entered into an agreement with the Idaho Legislature. The agreement concerns accommodations for public testimony and improvements to the Legislative website for Idahoans who are blind, low vision, and print disabled.

The lawsuit, filed in January, sought reasonable modifications under the Americans with Disabilities Act as well as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Both laws require state entities, like the Idaho Legislature, to make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Through this agreement, the Idaho State Legislature agreed to allow remote testimony in all committee hearings where public testimony is accepted. It also requires the Legislature’s website to make improvements so it is more accessible for blind, low vision, and print disabled Idahoans who use screen readers.

“We are pleased that Idaho’s Legislative Leadership have recognized and worked to accommodate the rights of Idahoans with disabilities,” said Jeremy Maxand, Executive Director for the Living Independence Network Corporation. “We also appreciate the cooperative manner in which this matter was resolved.

We look forward to making our voices heard and continuing to participate in the legislative process through fully functional remote testimony and the in-person precaution of adequate social distancing.

“No one should have to choose between their health and their right to petition their government,” said Amy Cunningham, Executive Director for DisAbility Rights Idaho. “The Americans with Disabilities Act provides important protections, and here ensures that persons with disabilities can receive the same government services as persons without disabilities.”

The lawsuit was brought by the Disability Action Center – Northwest, Inc., DisAbility Rights Idaho, Living Independence Network Corporation, Life – A Center For Independent Living, the Intermountain Fair Housing Council, and two individuals. They were represented by attorneys from the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection at Georgetown University Law School as well as the local law firm, Stoel Rives, LLP. The official press release is available at: https://lincidaho.org/state-and-local-news/lawsuit-between-disability-rights-groups-and-the-idaho-legislature-settled
Courageous Kids Climbing offers Opportunities

Courageous Kids Climbing is a McCall, Idaho based nonprofit that provides FREE opportunities for children of all ages and who have physical or developmental disabilities. Eligible participants experience the various forms of rock climbing at events held all over Idaho and Eastern Washington. The IceClimbers program provides FREE opportunities for people with disabilities to go ice skating in McCall. And the Climbing on Stuff adventures provides free opportunities for school age kids who are legally blind. Participants use their hands to “look” at things like fighter jets and helicopters.

There are a number of events scheduled for 2021. If you are interested you can email to get more information. Be sure to include which event(s) you are interested in attending. Pre-registration is required.

May 1 - 10am-noon: University of Idaho Climbing Center located in Moscow. 5th annual Courageous Kids Climbing event held here. Climbing is fun and beneficial for people with disabilities!

July 4 - 10am-11am: IceClimbers skating event in McCall. Participants skate with the McCall based IceClimbers Skating Team. After the ice skating step outside and watch the McCall Winter Carnival MardiGras parade from a special viewing area.

September 26 - 9am-11am: Washington State University Climbing Center in Pullman Washington. Up to 20 kids can participate and rock climb with coaches and volunteer belayers.

October 2 - 1pm-3pm Climbing on Stuff with the Idaho State Police in Lewiston. Attend this special afternoon with a chance to explore a patrol car and participate in other activities to help understand law enforcement.

Email: courageouskidsclimbing@gmail.com
“When you go out into the woods and look at trees, you see all these different trees. Some of them are bent, some of them are straight, some of them are evergreens, and some of them are deciduous. And you look at the tree and you allow it. You appreciate it. You see why it is the way it is. You sort of understand that it didn’t get enough light, so it turned where there was light. And you don’t get all emotional about it. You just allow it. You appreciate the tree.

“The minute you get near humans, you lose all that. And you are constantly saying ‘You’re too this’ or ‘I’m too that.’ Our judgmental mind comes in. So I practice turning people into trees, as the American spiritualist Ram Das says - appreciating them just the way they are.”

Whenever you see a person with Down syndrome, appreciate them just the way they are.

This appreciation has a long history of official recognition. In 2011, the General Assembly declared March 21st World Down Syndrome Day to celebrate the uniqueness of the triplication of the 21st chromosome that causes Down syndrome.

People with Down syndrome are part of our families and the love we share, and part of the give and take of a full range of human activity. They make contributions to the fabric of our life. They participate in religious activities, become artists, musicians and dancers, enjoy sports and recreational activities like people in the general population. Some attend college, others work and volunteer. Like each of us, like each tree out there, people with Down syndrome bring with them a richness, humor, and wisdom that adds to the lives of all they touch. I told my daughter that the world celebrates Down syndrome day March 21, but that I celebrate her every day. To which she said “Of course you do. You’re my mother.” My daughter is one of the wisest people I know.

People with Down syndrome are making another tremendous contribution that few know about. They are genetically connected to Alzheimer’s disease, which is the main medical problem and cause of death in adults with Down syndrome. The disease and this connection is being studied intensely. Down syndrome is now considered a genetically determined form of Alzheimer’s disease. How, you ask? Because people born with Down syndrome have an extra or triplication of the 21st chromosome. This chromosome carries the gene which provides the genetic instructions for making a protein called amyloid precursor protein, (APP) which is central to the study of Alzheimer’s disease. According to Juan Fortea, PhD, an international leader in the study of Down syndrome and Alzheimer’s, “People with Down syndrome are the best population to study for treatment and cure of all people with Alzheimer’s because it is a pure form of the disease.”

This is hardly comforting, but Dr. Fortea stresses that the treatment possibilities for people with or without
Down Syndrome (con’t)

increases the research on people with Down syndrome. So those with Down syndrome are helping people in profound ways, and similar to the overlook trees in the forest that are helping all the other trees.

International networks and trial-ready cohorts have been built to perform observational studies and clinical trials. How is Alzheimer’s studied and diagnosed in people with Down syndrome? It’s complicated, because Down syndrome is associated with intellectual disability and with Alzheimer’s. What you really need is a doctor trained to work with people with disabilities who can adapt neuropsych tests and interpret the results to the level of the disability. These neuropsych evaluations are often useful and can be used to develop longitudinal assessments and trajectory for an individual to follow over the years.

Mental health discrimination is a problem for many people with disabilities. According to Thomas F. Coleman, legal director of Spectrum Institute and co-chair of the Mental Health Project of Spectrum Institute, “It is disability discrimination under the ADA for guardians, conservators, and or the care providers to deprive people with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities access to a full range of mental health therapy options that are available to the general population. Care providers who willfully or negligently deprive necessary health care services, such as the test for APP levels, to dependent adults in their custody or care commit dependent adult abuse.”

We need to make the delivery of mental health services in each state compliant with the ADA. The Department of Justice (DOJ) brought suit against the State of Mississippi for this and the DOJ won. This is a civil-rights precedent and a fiscal win for all the residents of Mississippi, including people with Down syndrome.

I hope you will urge your legislators to begin the work of reforming the delivery of mental health services in your state — not only for people with Down syndrome but for everyone. I also hope with all my heart that on World Down Syndrome Day, everyone acknowledged the value of people with Down syndrome and learned to appreciate them just the way they are, the same way we appreciate trees and all their many variations.
Providers of direct care services, including self-directed ones, are mobilizing to address a concerning, and challenging shortage of Idaho workers.

Direct care workers assist the elderly or people with disabilities who qualify for Medicaid and Social Security, who are able to, and choose to, live independently in their own homes.

Over the past year, there were 4,473 available job postings in Idaho for home health care and personal assistant aides, according to data from Burning Glass. This puts Idaho as the fourth highest state for such job postings. Since 2018 there has been a 135% jump in postings.

“It’s a growing industry,” said Esther Eke, regional economist for Idaho Department of Labor. “Those occupations are in high demand, and will be going forward. We’ve had a jump, despite the pandemic, when general demand went down.”

Why is there a shortage? These positions in Idaho also tend to be lower paying compared to other states. They typically make between $3-$6 less an hour.

Mark Leeper, Executive Director for Disability Action Center NW, said while he has seen a shortage of direct care workers for years, the pandemic essentially grew the problem.

Service providers in communities near the border especially feel the squeeze. It’s easy to cross the border and make more money.

Providers of personal assistants are reimbursed an hourly rate from Medicaid of about $10 an hour for the worker plus admin costs such as scheduling and billing. It’s difficult to be competitive with that wage. Plus, when the pandemic hit, other industries were able to increase wages and provide hazard pay. At this pay rate it’s difficult to compete with entry level jobs in fast food, etc.

These providers have banded together to reach the Idaho Legislators and stress the importance of a higher Medicaid reimbursement rate as part of the state budget. A percentage of that funding is matched federally. Also to tie training and certifications to wage increases, like a career ladder, to help with worker retention. You can help by contacting your representative and asking for support.
Gardening made easier for everyone! With simple, portable, expandable Accessible Gardens, you can locate them anywhere - indoors or out. Transform any space into an engaging, productive garden space. With these easy to assemble boxes, everything is within arm's reach, no bending or kneeling. https://www.accessiblegardens.com

Want to advocate for accessible community gardens? Check out this page on the ADA National Network and see how others made this happen. Organize, fundraise, and volunteer build a space to garden for people with all kinds of disabilities. Gardening is such a pleasure, it needs to be inclusive! https://adata.org/universal-garden

Want to build an accessible garden yourself? GardenTech has a blog post with pros and cons of different types of accessible beds, and help in building one yourself. For instance, a raised bed you can roll under is easiest for a person using a wheelchair, but shallow bed depth can be hard to grow anything but the simplest vegetables. https://www.gardentech.com/blog/gardening-and-healthy-living/gardening-for-everyone-creating-accessible-gardens

Don't want to build it yourself? Consider these specially designed roll under garden beds with irrigation built in. They can be easily arranged in a circle or other shapes on a patio or back yard. And the hydroponics grows bigger, healthier plants. You can roll right up within smelling distance of plants! https://greencirclegarden.com

You can make different kinds of gardens - touch and scent for the visually impaired. Or a memory garden for people with dementia, or even a healing garden filled with medicinal herbs and teas. Lot’s of ideas here for how to build the perfect dream garden for you! https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/accessible
Spring Cleaning for Emergency Preparedness

March 20th was the official beginning of spring and for a lot of households that means one thing: spring cleaning! It’s also a great chance to make sure your family is prepared for inclement weather and other natural disasters. Check out the list below to keep your home and your loved ones safe and sound throughout the year.

Find your safe place
Identify the best place in your home to take shelter in case of severe weather or natural disaster, such as an earthquake. Make sure everyone in the family knows where to go in an emergency!

Make a plan
Create a plan for your family to meet up in case you are separated during an emergency. Choose a meeting place and strategy for contacting one another, make sure everyone knows the plan by heart. It is a good idea to have someone from outside your area be your phone contact…local phone lines may be overwhelmed.

Stock your supplies
An emergency bag is a must for all homes. Keep items together. A duffel bag or backpack works great. Once you have it put together, make sure everyone in the family knows where it is, and it is only to be used in emergencies. You can get a list of items here: https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home-products/a33605583/bug-out-bag-list/

Check your smoke alarms
The batteries in your smoke detectors should be replaced twice a year. While you're at it, test to make sure each one is working, and be sure that you have at least one detector installed on each level of your home.

Clear that laundry lint
Built up lint behind the dryer is a major cause of house fires. Use a vacuum hose to remove any stray lint that may be hiding back there.

Trim those limbs
Dead trees and rotten branches can pose a major threat during severe storms. High winds can easily pull them down onto your home, causing property damage or injuries. Take the time during spring cleaning to identify and remove limbs and trees that may cause problems around the yard.

Get your weather radio ready for action
Every home should have a NOAA Weather Radio to receive official updates during emergencies. They can be purchased at any electronics store or online, and the batteries should be replaced at least once a year.
Check out MSHope!

Do you have Multiple Sclerosis? Check out the MSHope website that has had great success with diet and exercise to control the symptoms.

The site is for people newly diagnosed or currently living with MS. It uses science based strategies that have been tested for more than 25 years to help you live drug-free. There are useful guidelines and links to the research behind it. The Best Bet Diet explains how nutritional strategies can significantly slow or even halt the MS disease process. Exercise can play a key role in gaining control of your MS. And the latest science about proper blood flow is super important for people with MS. All of this support and information is offered FREE. There are checklists, recipe ideas, and a free cookbook to help. Daily inspiration and coaching through social media can help you stay on track and not cheat. Take control!

www.mshope.com

Quotes to make you think!

“There is no greater disability in society, than the inability to see a person as more.” ~ Robert M. Hensel, author of Writings on the Wall

Durable Medical Goods Exchange

We are not accepting any durable medical goods at this time since it’s difficult to clean them, but we are distributing them. Explain your needs and our trained staff may know the perfect item that will help you!

James Pickard in Moscow 208-883-0523
Valerie Johnson in Idaho Falls 208-529-8610
Tarey Wilder in Boise 208-336-3335 x220
The Toe Jammer Footplate is a new approach to total foot and toe protection for wheelchairs. They protect your feet from anything you could or will run into. Made of 3/16” marine grade aluminum base with a professionally welded toe guard 2” high that wraps around the front of the footplate and down the sides. All the safety and security of the big bulky cages used for sports but in a smaller design that is practical for everyday. It allows you to forget about your feet. You don’t need to worry about them sliding off and the possibility of dragging or twisting your foot. You don’t have to worry about smashing your toes into something causing cuts or broken toes. The plates are powder coated in your choice of colors to match or accent your wheelchair. There is even non-skid coating for when your feet are wet or you are wearing socks. You can even buy an unpainted one and paint it yourself!

$190.00 www.toejammerfootplatescom
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| **250 S Skyline Ste 1**  
Idaho Falls, ID 83402  
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208-529-6804 FAX |
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208-746-9033 VOICE-TDD  
208-746-1004 FAX  
888-746-9033 |
| **505 N Main St**  
Moscow, ID 83843  
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800-475-0070 |
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| **www.lincidaho.org** |