

# Family Connections Center

## MFOFC Family Leadership Series welcomes new Leadership for the Southeast Region

Kathleen has been working in our Family Support Center for several years, and it's with excitement she takes on a new role within the agency, as Southeast Family Leadership Series Coordinator. This position was held for 28 years by Emily Nisenbaum. Kathleen has been so grateful to receive mentorship from Emily over the past year and is excited to begin this journey.



Kathleen is a 2008 graduate of the Family Leadership Series. She lives with her family in Dartmouth and is the proud mom of Emma, Liam and Mae. Her passion for advocacy and supporting families began in 2005, when her son received a rare diagnosis of Congenital Disorder of Glycosylation. Navigating life for him, and his complex needs, ignited her passion for assisting families who find themselves on a similar journey. She instinctively held a vision for her son to live a life as natural and typical as his sisters, and it was her experience in the Family Leadership Series that added a level of credibility to her vision. In addition to her role as Southeast Regional Coordinator, she works to support families eligible for DDS in the greater New Bedford area through the Family Connections FS Center. Kathleen remains current on disability initiatives by attended trainings, conferences, workshops and professional development courses on a large variety of topics.

When she's not working, spending time with her family, watching sports or participating in recreational activities, she enjoys serving her community and being a part of effecting positive change. For several years Kathleen has been a Dartmouth town meeting member, and held a seat on the local Disability Commission. She's volunteered her time on school council boards, chaired the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) and currently holds a seat on the Dartmouth School Committee. Statewide, she was appointed as a citizen member of the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC) in 2015, where she's able to contribute to addressing the most important issues affecting people with developmental disabilities.

Kathleen is committed to continuing the effort in the Southeast Region through the Family Leadership Series to provide sustained advocacy and leadership training in pursuit of high quality, individualized community support and service options, including family support, for people with disabilities and their families. The Family Leadership Series, with its focus on inclusion, self-direction and positive vision, is the perfect way to continue that journey toward change. She hopes to uphold the high standards set forth by Emily Nisenbaum. To contact Kathleen, call 508-999-4436 ext. 133 or email [kathleenamaral@nemasketgroup.org](mailto:kathleenamaral@nemasketgroup.org)



### Family Connections Center Welcomes...

We would like to welcome Heidi Pina Barnes into her new position as the coordinator of the Family Connections Project. Heidi has work for the Nemasket Group for 20 years and brings a wealth of experience to her new job. In that time she has worked in several positions including being a direct support worker, team leader and Director of the Community Living program. She was Assistant Director of the Building Futures Project for eight years and for the past 2 1/2 years Heidi has been coordinator with the Agency with Choice program. Heidi lives in New Bedford with her husband and two sons and when she's not working she loves to travel. To contact Heidi call 508-999-4436 ext. 162



## The Arc of Massachusetts Bill Results

Operation House Call (S1222/H1954) remained in the Ways and Means Committee. The Arc will be working with the Sponsors to request the legislation be heard through informal sessions.

Housing (Accessory Apartments S2132) remained in the Senate Rules Committee. There was also an effort to insert "accessory apartment" language in a larger housing bill and that legislation did not make it to the floor for a debate and vote.

Dental Therapist Expansion (S1169/H2474) was also caught in the logjam at the end of the session and didn't get approval from the legislature. The language for this legislation was included in the bigger healthcare bill but both bills ran out of time. The Dental Therapist bill may also have a chance through informal sessions given there is wide support for the bill.

Criminal Justice Training regarding Autism (S1313) as well as Hospital Training - Autism (S1221/H3236) also suffered the same fate as other bills that had support but the legislative session ended before any action could take place.

Higher Education Opportunities for Students with I/DD (S698/H634) had tremendous advocacy efforts and support but the bill did not get reported out of the Ways and Means Committee. The Arc will work with our partners and our sponsors to get the bill through in informal sessions.

Loan Repayment Program for Human Service Workers (S42/H116) was in good shape with the language added to the opioid legislation but at some point, the language was stripped and the bill suffered the same fate as other bills where time ran out before the legislature could take any actions. The Loan Repayment bill remained with the respective Ways and Means Committees.

The message is that we are not giving up after a session of wonderful progress moving so many of our bills through committees and garnering great support throughout the legislature. Thank you to all who spoke, testified, and wrote to your legislators in hopes to bring these bills through to fruition. There is still work to be done, so stay tuned to The Arc. If you have any specific questions about any of The Arc's priority legislation, please contact Maura Sullivan at [sullivan@arcmass.org](mailto:sullivan@arcmass.org)

### *AND... Health Bill Filed by Congressman Seth Moulton in the US House*

On July 26, Representatives Seth Moulton (D-MA) and Gregg Harper (R-MS) introduced the Healthcare Extension and Accessibility for Developmentally Disabled and Underserved Population (HEADs UP) Act of 2018. This bill would declare people with DD a medically underserved population (MUP). People with DD face a shortage of primary care providers, as well as higher infant mortality rates, higher poverty rates, and shorter life expectancy than the general population.

The MUP designation comes with increased access to resources from 25 different government programs including Federally Qualified Health Centers, Community Health Centers, loan repayment and training programs under Health Resources and Services Administration Workforce Development and Training Programs, and preference in research within agencies such as the National Institutes of Health.

The Arc supports this bill. Leo Sarkissian noted, "We are happy that a Congressman from our own state is a leader in addressing health inequities for our constituents. This issue is a priority for us, as demonstrated through Operation House Call and systemic health care advocacy along with our research in 2008 on health disparities. We appreciate Seth Moulton's leadership." We also appreciate the recent filing of Disability Employment Incentive Act by Sen. Bob Casey, which if passed, will increase the Work Opportunity Tax Credit for employers.

# Food for Thought

## What is inclusion? What's Not?

Revolutionary Common Sense by Kathie Snow, [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com)

What is inclusion? Why are more people concerned about it? And why now?

Let's start with the last question. Some of us have been agitating for the inclusion and adults with disabilities in all areas of society for many years. (In my case, for 24 years, after my son, Benjamin, was diagnosed with cerebral palsy shortly after birth.) At that time, some people saw inclusion as a fad – the “wild” idea of “radical” parents – that would pass. But it wasn't and it didn't.

Why are some people concerned about inclusion? For many reasons, in no particular order. Because some parents want the same life for their children with disabilities that their children without disabilities have. Because some people embrace the spirit and intent of federal laws (Developmental Disabilities Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and others) that affirm the full participation of people with disabilities in all areas of society and/or prohibit discrimination based on disability. Because some people recognize that the invisibility of people with disabilities (in schools, community activities, employment, etc.) is *not* the result of one's choice to be invisible, but the outcome of systemic efforts by others to “help” people that resulted in segregation in special, separate programs. Because some people with disabilities and/or their families are refusing to accept segregation. Many people recognize the abject immorality of segregation, devaluing, and marginalizing people based on a characteristic – inclusion represents the polar opposite of institutionalizing people with disabilities, a practice that represented conventional wisdom for decades. (The 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* is unequivocal: “Segregated facilities are inherently unequal.”)

So inclusion – in schools, communities, employment, and other places – is a hot topic

for some. But many activities that are described as inclusive are not! (See my article on “Mainstreaming, Integration, Inclusion: Is There a Difference? on my website.)

It's estimated that 20 percent of adults and 10 percent of children have medical diagnoses that are categorized as disabilities. Those numbers represent the “natural proportion” of people with disabilities in our society. An inclusive environment is one that replicates the natural proportion. So in a classroom of 20 students, for example, there should be no more than two students with disabilities (10 percent). If the percentage of people with disabilities is greater than the natural proportion in any environment or activity, it is not inclusive; it represents an artificial environment. Inclusion means all people, in all environments, all the time; or as others have simply and eloquently said, “All means all.”

When we label something as inclusive but it's *not* (because it does not reflect the natural proportion), this doesn't simply represent a misuse of language; there can be harmful consequences, not only for people with disabilities, but for our society, as well. Let's look at some examples before going further.

A school principle says his school is inclusive because students with disabilities are *in the building* (but are isolated in “that room” at the end of the hallway). They don't participate in any way with students who do not have disabilities. Physical proximity is inclusion, in the mind of the principal (but it's not).

Someone shared info about an “inclusive cheerleading program for disabled girls” (their words, not mine). If it's “for disabled girls” then it's not inclusive. In this “program,” girls with disabilities were *not* part of the school's “regular” cheerleading squad; they were members of a parallel (separate) squad for just girls with disabilities. This is not inclusion. Could

high school girls *without* disabilities join this group? No.

Human service agencies provide disability services that are mandated by state and federal laws. Their programs (funded by tax dollars) are, by their nature, special and segregated since people *without* disabilities are not eligible for these programs. Some agencies are now promoting "community inclusion" activities: separate recreation programs (inclusion Special Olympics), dances only for adults with disabilities who receive services, etc. These may be located "in the community" (as opposed to an institution), but they do not represent "community inclusion" – people *without* disabilities are not participants.

Organized religion is not immune. (Christians might ask, "What would Jesus do?" I don't recall segregation of people with disabilities in the Bible – just the opposite.) "Special needs" programs for children and/or adults with disabilities are often the norm, but the religious entity considers itself inclusive. Examples abound in other areas of society – child care/preschools, recreational activities, clubs, separate proms at high schools, and more – that claim to be inclusive, but are not. Finally, special, separate college programs have been created for students with disabilities that essentially replicate the segregated life-skills classes of public schools. These are called inclusive, but are not. Students *without* disabilities are not in these classes.

What are the outcomes when well-intentioned people *believe* their actions are progressive, but they're actually regressive? Any separate, parallel, segregated activity inadvertently sends harmful messages and/or reinforces prejudicial stereotypes: "they" (people with disabilities) don't belong, aren't good enough, should be with their own kind, and more. In addition, the apparent "success" of any separate program breeds more of the same, as others think this must be the "right thing to do." The marginalization, devaluation, and isolation of people with disabilities continues. Those who promote separate, segregated activities as inclusive pat themselves on the back for their good deeds. People with disabilities are supposed to feel grateful that they're "allowed" to participate. The dangerous "us/them" mentality continues; social

justice, equality, and true inclusion remain an elusive dream.

We would never allow this for other populations. Would a predominately "white" school create a separate, parallel cheerleading squad for African-American girls? Or vice-versa: would a predominantly "black" school sanction a separate program for "white" students? Would a college authorize a separate parallel classroom only for students from the LGBT community? Think of other examples.

The issue *is not* whether people choose to self-segregate. We routinely join with others like ourselves based on shared interests: hobby clubs, park and rec activities, etc. The issue *is* when we create separate, parallel, segregated activities and call these inclusive; and in the process, exclude people with disabilities from ordinary and truly inclusive activities.

Instead of creating a special cheerleading squad, sports activity, or anything else, why not modify the "rules" to allow participation by all? That's what happened when the U.S. military and professional sports were racially-integrated in the 1940s, when women's military opportunities were expanded in the 1970s, and so forth. Again, think of other examples. If a group doesn't want to alter the competitive nature of its activity, for example, we can create a non-competitive, inclusive activity for all. Many families would like their children (*with and without* disabilities) to be in inclusive activities where one's participation is *not* dependent solely on skill level.

People with disabilities and/or families bear some responsibility for this situation. If, for example, parents didn't *allow* their children with disabilities to participate in segregated activities, they'd "go out of business." Hegemony is at work: "Dominance of one social group over another, such that the ruling group acquires some degree of consent from the subordinate..." [from <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/hegemony>].

Knowing what's inclusive is simple: is the activity open to all and does it reflect the natural proportion (no more than 20 percent adults with disabilities and/or 10 percent children with disabilities)? Let's not use words like "inclusive" to mask segregation and/or to make ourselves feel or look good. Our fellow citizens who happen to have disabilities deserve better.

# Did You Know

## NAA's Big Red Safety Boxes® Now Available!

The National Autism Association's Big Red Safety Box® is a free-of-charge safety toolkit for autism families in need of wandering-prevention tools.

To learn:

- What the NAA's Big Red Safety Box® includes
- Other important information about the Big Red Safety Box®
- And How to apply



Go to <http://nationalautismassociation.org/big-red-safety-boxes-now-available/>

To apply for an NAA Big Red Safety Box®, you must:

- Be the primary caregiver of an individual with an autism diagnosis.
- Be 18 years or older and a resident of the U.S.
- Agree to the terms and conditions stated in the application.
- Be a first-time recipient. Previous recipients are not eligible to apply, orders will be canceled.
- Apply only once. Multiple requests will not be processed, limit one box per family.

**Please note:** Allow up to 3 weeks for NAA to review your application and deliver your Big Red Safety Box



The REquipment Durable Medical Equipment & Assistive Technology Reuse Program, <http://dmerequipment.org>, provides free of charge equipment for anyone living in the state regardless of where they live. Their goal is to assist elders and individuals with disabilities of all ages including veterans in accessing gently used durable medical equipment and assistive technology. Our mission is to increase independence for the individual with a disability or elder through access to free refurbished durable medical equipment and assistive technology for home, community, school or work.

Here is the list of products in the inventory:

- power wheelchairs
- manual wheelchairs
- scooters
- sling lifts
- standers
- tub seats and shower chairs
- adapted strollers
- knee walkers
- bed safety rails
- seating and position devices.
- portable ramps

To keep the inventory full for requests please contact REquipment to donate or complete the online donation form at [www.dmereuse.org](http://www.dmereuse.org).

For more information: contact us at 1-800-261-9841 or [info@dmereuse.org](mailto:info@dmereuse.org).

# What does it mean to be intelligent?

By Cristela Guerra GLOBE STAFF May 09, 2018

What does it mean to be intelligent?

It's this notion that New Hampshire filmmaker Dan Habib tackles in his new documentary, "Intelligent Lives." It stars three people with intellectual disabilities, each at different stages of life. The film follows them as they navigate high school, college, and the workplace.



Filmmaker

"The film is really an attempt to both show people how we got to a place where intelligence can be categorized in these narrow ways and how flawed those measures are," Habib said. "It also shows what a whole new paradigm would look like for seeing intelligence more broadly." As a father of a young man with cerebral palsy, Habib's first documentary, "Including Samuel," which came out in 2008, informed his most recent. That film focused on his son and what it means to be socially inclusive of people with disabilities.

At screenings, one question kept coming up.

"Well, what about people with intellectual disabilities?" Habib said viewers would ask. "'They can't really be included right? I mean they can't go to regular school or work or go to college?'" Habib started researching and found the statistics shocking. Only 17 percent of students with intellectual disabilities are included in regular classrooms and though an estimated 6.5 million Americans have some kind of intellectual disability, only 15 percent are employed. Yet, in the film, the people Habib follows break down barriers, bolstered by a community of loved ones who support their autonomy and help them reach their potential.

One of them is Naieer Shaheed, a senior at The Henderson K-12 Inclusion School in Dorchester. Shaheed is on the autism spectrum and loves to paint. This manifests itself in various ways such as erratic movements. His parents often worry about how he will be perceived. I want him to go into a world where he's looked at as a fellow citizen of this world," said Jamaal Shaheed, Naieer's father. "Not someone, 'Oh, there's a tall black guy who's acting weird. Let me call back-up.'"



Naieer Shaheed in art class in Dan Habib's documentary, "Intelligent Lives."

There's Naomie Monplaisir, a young Haitian woman with Down Syndrome also featured in the documentary. Enrolled in a job training program in Providence, she learns customer service and eventually finds a job as project assistant at the Empire Beauty School in Warwick, R.I. Monplaisir had previously been enrolled in a segregated special education program at the [Harold A. Birch Vocational School](#) in Providence from age 15 to 21. In 2014, the US Department of Justice [found](#) that the school forced students like Monplaisir work for little to no pay.

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In the film, her mother, Altigrace Monplaisir, said in Creole they were told Birch was their only option. Now, the young woman is thriving in the training program and at her job. Her brother Steven Monplaisir believes his sister will live on her own one day. "She's definitely a smart girl," Steven said in the film. "She's definitely always willing to learn. I don't want to see her just be boxed in just because of her disability."

The film provides context for how society came to define intelligence by a numeric value. Created by French psychologist Alfred Binet, the original IQ test had been intended as a tool to identify kids that needed extra help, Habib said. The film said that this test was distorted and used to discriminate or label certain ethnic groups as "feeble-minded."

Cameras follow Micah Fialka-Feldman, another young man, as he goes on dates, lives with a roommate, and makes decisions for himself. His mother said doctors called her son developmentally delayed and neurologically impaired when he was infant due to a low IQ. By the end of the documentary, Fialka-Feldman dons a blue robe and graduates from Syracuse University with a certificate in disability studies. "I kind of watched my parents fight for me and then kind of helped me understand that sometimes you have to fight to get what you want," Fialka-Feldman said in the film.



*Micah Fialka-Feldman walking to class in Dan Habib's, "Intelligent Lives."*

Academy-award winning actor Chris Cooper narrates the film and shares some of his family's own story. Cooper and his wife, actress and author Marianne Leone Cooper, live in Kingston and fought for their son's basic civil rights to go to a regular school. Though Jesse had cerebral palsy, was quadriplegic, and nonverbal, he was also a poet, traveled the world with his parents, made close friends, and became a staunch activist for disability rights. Jesse died in 2005 when he was 17 from sudden unexpected death in epilepsy, or SUDEP.

Habib dedicated the film to him.

"The IQ test told us nothing about my child's potential, about who he was as a person," said Chris Cooper says about Jesse in the opening scene of the film. "Can any attempt to measure a person's intelligence predict a person's value or ability to contribute meaningfully to the world?" The Coopers know that their son changed lives simply by being himself.

"For an inclusive society it's important that we be exposed to all kinds of people," said Marianne Leone Cooper in an interview with the Globe. "It's way better if you get to go to school with everybody and understand that they're not the 'other.'" In the film, they call him a "force in this world." Each character in the film gives a glimpse "what's possible," Habib said in an interview with the Globe of the lives that people with intellectual disabilities live despite a label that says otherwise.

"After dealing with all these bumps in the road, once we cleared up a lot of the issues and Jesse got to school, he flourished, he thrived, and he proved them wrong," said Chris Cooper, in an interview with the Globe.

*Cristela Guerra can be reached at [cristela.guerra@globe.com](mailto:cristela.guerra@globe.com). Follow her on Twitter [@CristelaGuerra](#).*

# Assume Ability

Article from the July 19<sup>th</sup> Martha's Vineyard Times,  
'Intelligent Lives' shows us what inclusion can look like for persons with disabilities.

Author: Connie Berry, Southeast Family Leadership Series alum



*Jesse, Marianne, and Chris Cooper.  
—Photo Courtesy intelligentlives.org*

Our culture has had its fair share of struggles when it comes to treating everyone equally. We've seen the #metoo movement, the Black Lives Matter campaign, the gay pride movement, and we're still working on gender equality. Dan Habib, Chris Cooper and Marianne Leone Cooper are working on a new movement, the "Opening Doors" campaign. They hope it will gain momentum this fall when their film "Intelligent Lives," opens with a broader distribution. They hope #IntelligentLives and #OpeningDoors will raise awareness and jumpstart discussion around the segregation of persons with physical and intellectual disabilities.

They have a direct interest in the film — and in opening doors. Habib's son Samuel has cerebral

palsy, as did the Cooper's son, Jesse, who passed away in 2005. They've fought battles in schools and in communities to make sure their children had access to the same opportunities as their peers. Habib is a documentary filmmaker whose first film, "Including Samuel," was about his son. He works at the University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability. Chris Cooper is an Academy Award winning actor, and Marianne is an actress and author of the book "Jesse: A Mother's Story." Chris narrates the film.

"Intelligent Lives" explores the history of disability in the U.S. and revisits some of the disturbing footage from Geraldo Rivera's 1972 exposé on Willowbrook State School on Staten Island, which closed in 1987. The film takes viewers through the history of IQ testing in the U.S. (Forty-nine of the 50 states still use IQ testing as a way to determine if a student will carry a lifelong label as a person with an intellectual disability, Chris tells us in the film.)

The documentary follows three young adults living meaningful and connected lives. We meet Naleer, a young autistic man with a passion for painting; Naomie, a young woman with Down syndrome who begins a new paying job at a beauty salon; and Micah, a student at Syracuse University's InclusiveU, which brings students of all ages with intellectual and developmental disabilities to the university, where they experience college life in an inclusive setting.

In each individual's case, the film confronts some of the challenges they face, but more importantly, it amplifies their achievements. It reminds everyone watching of the dignity and humanity of these three young adults.

The Times spoke with Habib and the Coopers last week in a conference call.

The Coopers explained that when Jesse was 6 his neurologist told them — in front of Jesse — that he would never be "intellectually normal" and that they should send him to Massachusetts Hospital

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School in Canton, now the Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital for Children. It's an acute long-term care facility. Marianne's response was a resounding "No."

"I just knew," Marianne said. "I was the mother that everyone rolled their eyes at. But I knew he was in there. I knew it when he burst out laughing when I played Alvin and the Chipmunks in his headphones." Marianne said that was when she told Chris, "Screw the Itsy Bitsy Spider, we're giving him Yeats." Jesse eventually wrote poetry of his own and aced every one of his Latin exams. Using an eye-gaze computer, he could read and communicate, and he played video games with his dad and won, Marianne said.

"We're constantly battling low expectations," Dan said. "That's something Marianne and Chris had to do, and we had to push with Samuel, to raise expectations for marginalized people." Even after they moved to Kingston, Mass., to give Jesse a better educational experience, Chris said they still faced special education administrators who didn't want to deal with Jesse. "We had to confront them and bring other parents in, and then once we settled in, each New Year he'd have to prove himself to the new teacher," Chris said.

Dan said many school districts claim they don't have the funds to provide a completely inclusive education experience for students with disabilities. But he said that's false. "It's not about money, it's about strong leadership in the district," he said.

"It's cheaper in the end," Marianne added. "Besides, there's the humanity part of it. We didn't want our kid included so he could be the inspiration for everyone else, but it kind of turned out that way. Inclusion changes the way you relate to people with disabilities."

"Intelligent Lives" provided a platform for the Coopers to tell Jesse's story, and the impact he made on the people around him. Chris said having Jesse absolutely changed their lives.

"When you look at the business Marianne and I are in, you're treated like kings and queens frankly, and you can assume that you're very self-important," Chris said. "I always thought we kept pretty level-headed, but Jesse really, really instilled in us the important things in life."

"He was the best teacher ever," Marianne added. "He kept us from not being in fantasy land. I learned patience, which I'm terrible at, and to look deeper."

The young adults in "Intelligent Lives" are navigating college experiences, working with a job coach, socializing with their friends and their families. Micah left his parents' home in Michigan to move to Syracuse to attend InclusiveU. He's become his own best advocate. "It all starts with advocating for inclusion," Dan said. "It's one thing to talk about it but it's totally different to actually be in that classroom. You have to experience it." The principal of Naieer's school, Henderson Inclusion School in Dorchester, says inclusion has helped the teachers become more individualized, personal educators. "I really believe that what we are doing is fighting against segregation again," she says, "segregation based on ability."

Segregating Jesse didn't work for the Coopers and it didn't work for the Habibs' son Samuel.

"Disability is a natural part of diversity that we should embrace," Chris said. "In a nutshell, what Dan has touched on is that nothing is going to happen unless we rub elbows, and that starts in school when we're young."

Check out an upcoming screening of intelligent lives, October 11<sup>th</sup> 5:30-8:30 at Rhode Island College. Visit <http://bit.ly/2vcVSmF> for more information.

## We are currently accepting applications for the 27th Southeast Family Leadership Series.



The Series focuses on supporting families to advocate for their family member with disabilities to live in their communities as naturally and typically as desired & has a three-fold purpose. One is to offer information about "best practices" for people with disabilities, the second to assist families in creating a vision for their family member and a process to achieve the vision through leadership and advocacy and the third is to develop family leaders who will advocate at the local and state level to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities.

For information, contact Kathleen Amaral  
Tel: 508-999-4436 or Email: [kathleenamaral@nemasketgroup.org](mailto:kathleenamaral@nemasketgroup.org)

## Supported Decision-Making An alternative to guardianship

Supported Decision-Making is an alternative to guardianship through which people with disabilities get help from trusted family members, friends, and professionals to help them understand the situations and choices they face, so they can make their own decisions. Supported Decision-Making enables people with disabilities to ask for support where and when they need it. Powers of Attorney, representative payees and simple release of information forms can also help families provide the needed supports and safeguards without going to court and imposing guardianship restrictions. Supported decision-making (SDM) allows individuals with disabilities to make choices about their own lives with support from a team of people. Individuals with disabilities choose people they know and trust to be part of a support network to help with Decision-making.

The Center for Public Representation (CPR) has partnered with Massachusetts Families Organizing for Change (MFOFC), through a pilot project, to expand supported decision-making across Massachusetts.

For More Information, contact Sandra Heller  
508-999-4436 ext. 128

## AAPD Paul G. Hearne Emerging Leader Awards

Applications are now open for the 2019 AAPD Paul G. Hearne Emerging Leader Awards. The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) recognizes outstanding emerging leaders with disabilities who exemplify leadership, advocacy, and dedication to the broader cross-disability community. The recipients of the 2019 AAPD Paul G. Hearne Emerging Leader Awards will be honored among national disability leaders at the [AAPD Leadership Awards Gala](#) in Washington, DC. Deadline to apply is October 1st.

To learn more visit: [www.aapd.com/aapd-paul-g-hearne-leadership-awards/](http://www.aapd.com/aapd-paul-g-hearne-leadership-awards/)

# Upcoming Events

The Dartmouth SEPAC invites you to:  
6th Annual Southeastern MA  
Community Resource & Craft Fair



\*\*FREE and OPEN to the PUBLIC\*\*

The purpose of this event is to bring together a wide-range of Local Community Resources and talented Local Artist, Crafters & Vendors under one roof, so that parents, grandparents, caretakers, educators & community partners can easily obtain information about programs & services available to ALL students & families within the Southeast region, as well as take time to shop dozens of local handmade crafters & specialty vendor items available within the Craft Fair.

We believe that connecting with meaningful community resources leads to positive outcomes for students and families, as well as the greater community.

We hope you'll attend. Please share with your network of families, friends and colleagues.

For more information, please contact DartmouthSEPAC@gmail.com



## NEED A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS?

JOIN US FOR OUR PARENTS,  
GRANDPARENTS OR GUARDIANS OF  
PEOPLE ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM  
DISORDER (ASD) SUPPORT GROUP

## H.U.G.S GROUP

SEPTEMBER 11, 2018 @ 10:30 AM  
SHARE THE HARVEST COMMUNITY FARM  
THE DARTMOUTH YMCA  
276 GULF ROAD  
SOUTH DARTMOUTH, MA 02748

TO RSVP: CALL IVONE REGO-CASS #508-999-4436 EXT. 118

SPECIAL GUEST: SHARE THE HARVEST VOLUNTEER DAY!  
DRESS APPROPRIATELY... WE WILL BE CULTIVATING VEGETABLES, PLAYING IN  
DIRT AND GETTING WET! BRING WATER, SNACKS AND A TOWEL.



## You are invited to attend the M.A.S.S. Annual Self-Advocacy Conference " 20 Years Strong "

Saturday, September, 15, 2018  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
DCU Center in Worcester, MA.

This event will be filled with inspiring and educational workshops presented by self-advocates, exhibitor tables, interesting speakers, awards, raffle, arts/crafts tables, M.A.S.S. T-shirts, photo booth and more. We are thrilled to announce that Tia Nelis will be our keynote speaker at this conference. Tia is a well known and accomplished spokesperson for the self-advocacy movement throughout the U.S. She is going to set the tone for this empowering self-advocacy conference.

Don't miss this event! Register now at <https://ma-advocates.org>  
Come join us celebrate what self-advocacy is all about.

See you on Saturday, September 15, 2018!

We are all looking forwards to seeing you at this exciting event and hope you will come away from it feeling inspired and empowered.