

AFN Disability Partner Space Minutes

July 11th, 2022 | 4:00pm – 5:00pm

I. Welcome & Introduction

- This session was facilitated by Keshreeyaji Oswal, a member of the AFN workgroup.

II. Partner Spotlight: Mayra Colazo – Central WA Disability Resources (CWDR)

- Tell us more about Central WA Disability Resources.
 - CWDR is a nonresidential center for independent living.
 - Some of the services they provide include advocacy, community education, peer mentoring, and skills development.
 - Both the staff and the board are made up of people with disabilities, so when someone is seeking services, they can get help from someone who has a similar disability or a similar lived experience.
 - CWDR covers Kitsap, Yakima, Grant, Chelan, and Douglas counties.
- What do your community care efforts and engagement look like?
 - Independent living assistance – Helping individuals find housing opportunities and apply.
 - Benefit planning – Assisting individuals when they are applying for social security, basic food benefits, health insurance, etc.
 - Information and referral – If their staff are not able to assist a client in the way they need, they can find other organizations that can fill their need and CWDR will work with the client through those encounters.
 - Advocacy – Advocating on a client's behalf and participating in groups where staff can advocate for people with disabilities.
 - Universal design (making all spaces accessible to a wide range of individuals) can benefit many people, not just people with disabilities. For example, a mother pushing a stroller is not going to be able to traverse a set of stairs and a ramp would be helpful to her as well as a person using a wheelchair.
 - There are no good examples of universal design in Washington currently, which is why these principles are so important.
- How do you center disability justice and individuals with AFN?
 - CWDR does not require medical documentation of a disability and serves people with any kind of disability.
 - CWDR defines disability as some part of your life that impacts your life and causes barriers.
- As a Thought Partner – reflecting on your role, how can we prioritize community voice and perspective in our decision making and planning efforts?

- Collaboration and partnerships – Sharing data, information, and resources. One example of this is the Washington Plan for Independent Living Survey, where many different groups were able to work together in pushing out the survey.
- Anything else you would like to share?
 - Keep advocating! Marginalized individuals have to say something or else change is never going to happen.
- Learn more about Central WA Disability Resources at <https://www.mycwdr.org/>.
- Links shared by Mayra:
 - Find what Center for Independent Living (CIL) covers your area: <https://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-center-and-association-directory>
- If you have questions about this presentation or about Central WA Disability Resources, please contact Mayra Colazo at mayra@mycwdr.org.

III. Partner Spotlight: Todd Holloway – Center for Independence

- Tell us more about Center for Independence.
 - The core services of independent living organizations are the same, so CFI's are generally the same as CWDR's.
 - Currently working on the State Plan For Independent Living, a road map for where to focus the objectives, services, activities for CILs in Washington for the next ten years.
 - Make disability relatable to everyone.
 - If you are lucky to live long enough, you will eventually have a disability (vision, hearing, etc.).
 - Consider everyone who has access and functional needs.
 - Advocacy – educating state representatives
- What do your community care efforts and engagement look like?
 - Coalition For Inclusive Emergency Management and Cascadia Rising 22 – How do we ensure the safety of people with access and functional needs when there is an emergency, public health or otherwise?
 - Transportation – Increasing accessible transportation both in urban and rural areas.
 - Housing – Bridging the digital divide and creating veterans-specific programs.
- Anything else you would like to share?
 - Make sure that people know that everyone is welcome in the disability advocacy and rights movement, regardless of sexual orientation, skin color, or language. We need to work together if we are strong and help those who are not.
- Learn more about Center for Independence at <https://www.cfi-wa.org/>.
- If you have any questions about this presentation or about the Center for Independence, please contact Todd Holloway at toddh@cfisouth.org.

IV. Closing

- If you would like to share about the work you are doing during a partner spotlight in a future AFN meeting, please email us at vax.collaborative@doh.wa.gov.