



Community Links

April 2019

"To provide quality services in a cost-effective manner through innovation, leadership, and the cooperation of dedicated people."

24th Annual Minnesota Autism Conference



The conference is where we'll join our voices as a passionate network to connect and inspire innovation. Here, expert speakers, educators, professionals, caregivers, and individuals with Autism have a platform to exchange knowledge and ideas with one another – all with the goal of enhancing the lives of those on the autism spectrum.

The 2019 event will feature 39 breakout sessions and four keynote speakers including: Sue Swenson, MBA sponsored by LEND; Theresa M. Regan, PhD, CBIS, CAS; Patrick Schwarz, PhD sponsored by St. David's Center for Child & Family Development; and Jennifer O'Toole sponsored by Minnesota Independence College & Community.

Wednesday-Saturday, April 24-27
Minneapolis Marriott Southwest,
Minnetonka (new venue)

View a [detailed conference schedule](#) and get information about registration on [AuSM's website](#).

Washington
County

April is National Autism Awareness Month

With a national prevalence rate of 1 in 59 and Minnesota's prevalence rate of 1 in 42, Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability. Everyone knows someone who is touched by Autism. In Washington County half of all new intakes in the Intellectual and Developmental Disability unit have a diagnosis of Autism.

To help celebrate and promote inclusiveness many local businesses and organizations have dedicated fun sensory-friendly events that can be enjoyed by all:

- **Autism at Work Career Expo**
Saturday, April 27 • 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.



Minneapolis College, Minneapolis
Cost: FREE
(parking and lunch provided)
www.minneapolis.edu/career-expo

- **Sensory-Friendly Saturdays**
Saturday, April 27 • 10:30-11:15 a.m.
Wescott Library, Eagan
Cost: FREE

www.co.dakota.mn.us/libraries/Programs/Kids/Pages/sensory-friendly-saturdays.aspx

- **The Most Magnificent Thing**
Saturday, May 4 • 10:00 a.m.



Stages Theatre Company,
Hopkins
Cost: \$10
www.stagestheatre.org/about-us/accessibility/#1525286451121-7cd0fc7a-3247

- **Autism Friendly Hour**
This activity is offered all summer.
Check out website for future dates.

Sundays, June 9, 16, and 23
10:00-11:00 a.m.
Battlecreek Waterworks Water Park,

Maplewood
Cost: \$7 (discounts available)
www.ramseycounty.us/waterworks

- **Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical**



Friday, June 21 •
7:00 p.m.
Children's Theatre Company,
Minneapolis
Cost: \$15-\$20
<https://my.childrenstheatre.org/single/SYOS.aspx?p=7888>

- **AuSM's 2nd Annual AuSM Connections Jigsaw Puzzle Competition**



Saturday, July 13 • 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Mall of America Rotunda, Bloomington
Cost: \$50 per team
To register and get more information, visit www.ausm.org/events/ausm-fundraisers/puzzle-competition-2019.html.

- **Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka**
Saturday, July 13 • 10:00 a.m.
Stages Theatre Company, Hopkins
Cost: \$10
www.stagestheatre.org/about-us/accessibility/#1525286451121-7cd0fc7a-3247

A more complete list of community events and sensory-friendly activities can be found at www.ausm.org.

10th Annual
Disabilities Resource Fair
Making Connections



Free admission, training, and parking. There will be providers, vendors, resources, AuSM bookstore, food for purchase, and professional child care (trained staff and volunteers will provide supervision and activities). *Parents/Guardians are expected to remain in the building and be responsible for their children.*

Saturday, May 4
8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Monticello High School,
Monticello

For questions, contact: Richelle Kramer at 763-682-7445 or news@autismallies.org.

.....
Upcoming CDCS Trainings

These CDCS orientation sessions are facilitated by two Community Services staff. Please inform your county case manager which session you plan to attend.

- **Thursday, May 16**
- **Thursday, August 15**
- **Tuesday, November 19**

6:00-8:00 p.m.
Washington Co. Government Center
14949 62nd St., N., LL Room 16
Stillwater

.....
**Washington County
Crisis Response Unit**

The crisis response unit provides:

- 24/7 adult and child mental health mobile crisis services
- After-hours child protection screening and response
- After hours emergency social services

651-275-7400
.....

Brain Balance



"Brain Balance has been a miracle in the making for my son's development. He now expresses his emotions in healthy ways, is able to sit still, has made new friends, and has better focus. I want to extend my gratitude to the Brain Balance team for all the effort and time you invest to help kids with special needs." – Jen R.

<https://blog.brainbalancecenters.com/tag/learning-disorders>

Brain Balance Has A Plan For Kids Who Struggle

For parents, one of the hardest experiences is seeing your child struggle with academic, social, or behavioral issues. It can often feel overwhelming when you know that your child is struggling, especially when it seems as though resources for help are limited. We want you to know that help is out there and that your family doesn't have to work through these issues alone. Brain Balance Achievement Center of Woodbury specializes in helping children overcome the obstacles they may be facing both at home and in the classroom.

At Brain Balance, there is hope for children struggling with meltdowns, impulsiveness, sensory processing, and social issues. Our holistic program can help children ages



4-18 years old with a variety of childhood developmental and learning disorders, including Attention Hyperactivity Deficit Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, Sensory Processing Disorders, Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Autism, and Leaky Gut. Our program at Brain Balance Achievement Center of Woodbury addresses the root cause of each child's unique issues and creates a custom plan based on the results of a child's personal assessment.

Our center's drug-free, integrated approach combines brain work focused on sensory-motor exercises, academic skill activities, confidence building, and a nutritional program to address the whole-child. Want to help your child achieve their full potential? It's your child's time to shine!

A Non-Medical, Drug-Free, Whole-Child Approach

The [Brain Balance program](#) works to help children in Washington County by



taking an integrated approach to common childhood issues. In order to ensure that local children are receiving the attention and the help they need to succeed, we partner with

multiple area school districts and work to collaborate with other support systems your child may have in place.

We invite you and your family to come visit our center at 783 Radio Drive, Suite 106, Woodbury, MN. Enjoy a personal tour, meet our dedicated staff, and see first-hand how the Brain Balance Achievement program is helping local children overcome their struggles.

Call us at 651-731-6172 or visit www.BrainBalance.com. We can't wait to help you find the right solution for your child!

New Benefits for CDCS, CSG, and PCA Workers

Contact your case manager if you qualify.

What is offered?

\$500 STIPEND

(to the first 5,000 to qualify)
To promote a well-trained workforce.

Who Qualifies?

Workers in these programs:

- CDCS
- CSG
- PCA Choice

How can you earn it?

Training completed after July 1, 2016

- 3 Eligible Courses
- or 1 Course with a current CNA, LPN, or RN license or HHA certificate

When is it available?

As of July 1, 2018 or when all training is complete.

Until June 30, 2019

5% ENHANCED RATE

(to ALL who qualify)

For financial incentive(s) for workers to provide high-quality services to those with the highest needs.

Who Qualifies?

Workers in the following programs who provide services to people who are eligible for 12+ PCA hours per day:

- CDCS
- CSG
- PCA Choice
- Traditional PCA

How can you earn it?

Training completed after July 1, 2016

- 4 Eligible Courses
- or 1 Course with a current CNA, LPN, or RN license or HHA certificate

continued on page 4

Community Activities

• Adapted Climbing at Midwest Climbing Academy



MIDWEST
CLIMBING • ACADEMY

Academy Adaptive Climbing aims to create an inclusive climbing community for athletes with physical or cognitive disabilities in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. Our programs offer a space that is supportive and consistent to help participants achieve their personal climbing goals regardless of disability. We value accessibility of climbing, community, and challenging perspectives of what is possible for someone with a disability. There are a few different ways to get involved:

• Adaptive Climbing Nights

We offer monthly climbing nights. \$20 per athlete. If you're looking for a casual, fun, and supportive environment to climb, these nights are for you!

3rd Sunday of every month • 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Sign up using this [online calendar link](#).

• 6-week Climbing Course

Twice per year, the academy partners with Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute for a 6-week rock climbing course. With one-on-one volunteers, this is a great opportunity for people to try climbing for the first time. *Registration for participants and volunteers is through Courage Kenny only via this [link](#).*

• Private Lessons

Looking for a quiet place to try climbing? Looking to work on specific climbing skills? Our coaches at the academy are skilled in climbing technique and training and are available to set up one time or ongoing private lessons. To inquire about private lessons, contact us by emailing: info@midwestclimbingacademy.com.

For questions or more information, visit www.midwestclimbingacademy.com.

• Family Concert at the Minnesota Orchestra:

The Tin Forest

Fun Facts:

- Join us for an inclusive concert experience sure to delight audiences of all ages and abilities! All seats \$12. One-hour concert in a relaxed environment. No intermission.
- Composer Steve Heitzeg often uses "found objects" as instruments in his works, and his music is filled with surprises. This will delight audiences who hear *The Tin Forest*, a musical retelling of Helen Ward's beloved children's book, in which an ugly junkyard magically grows into a beautiful forest.
- Rounding out this concert are thrilling Dvořák, Smetana, and Florence Price selections performed by the Orchestra, plus a star turn by pianist Emma Taggart, the talented 16-year-old winner of the 2018 Young People's Concerto Competition, who performs the dramatic third movement of Grieg's Piano Concerto.
- Host H. Adam Harris' recent theatrical credits include puppeteering and voicing the title role of *Dr. Seuss' The Lorax* in the U.S. premiere at the Children's Theatre Company (CTC) and The Old Globe Theatre. Next up, he will play Smaug and others in the five-person adaptation of *The Hobbit* at CTC, in addition to directing the world premiere of *How It's Gon' Be* by JuCoby Johnson with Underdog Theatre, presented at Mixed Blood Theatre.
- Participate in lobby activities (11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. and 2:00-2:45 p.m.), including opportunities to try orchestral instruments, engage in creative movement, participate in art-making, learn more about the program, and meet Minnesota Orchestra musicians.



continued on page 4

continued from *New Benefits for CDCS, CSG, & PCA Workers on page 3*

When is it available?
As of July 1, 2018 or when
all training is complete.
Indefinitely

**Some workers may qualify for both benefits.*

.....

Nick Boyer: In-Home Fitness and Nutrition Support



I began working with individuals who have special needs about seven years ago during my time as a personal trainer for the YMCA. I have in the past and currently work one-on-one with adolescents, youth, and adults with disabilities located in Washington, Dakota, and Ramsey counties. I've worked with a wide range of individuals with special needs including Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, and more. I go to their homes just like I do with my general population clients and collaborate with parents, caregivers, and support network to develop a workout and nutrition plan to fit their individual needs and abilities.

In addition to in-home fitness training, I also work with several local day programs and nonprofit organizations to lead group fitness and nutrition classes within the communities they serve. Many of the individuals I work with have weight loss goals,

continued on page 5

continued from *Community Activities on page 3*

Sensory-Friendly Family Concerts:

- The Minnesota Orchestra's Sensory-Friendly Concerts are inclusive experiences for audiences of all ages and abilities, including individuals on the autism spectrum and those with sensory sensitivities.
- All families are welcome! These concerts take place in a relaxed environment where audience members are welcome to be who they are and enjoy music together with family and friends.
- Learn more about the concert experience with our [tip sheet](#) and other preparatory materials!

Sunday, May 12 • 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. ([Buy tickets](#))

Minnesota Orchestra, Minneapolis

For questions or more information, visit www.minnesotaorchestra.org or call 612-371-5600.

• Kids-Connect

Valley Friendship Club (VFC) is excited to announce a new program offering more opportunities for our kids! VFC is expanding our Grader Gang to include all children birth to 12 years!

This change in our programming addresses the need in our community for children birth to 12 years to have more opportunities designed specifically for them to engage with and get to know each other at younger ages, while at the same time encouraging parents and/or caregivers of the younger set to have the opportunity to connect, share, and support as well.

The HUB, Valley Friendship Club's headquarters, (located near Hwy 5 and Hwy 36 in Stillwater), is a place that provides fun programming for children, teens, and young adults led by staff and volunteers free or for a nominal fee.

"Kids-Connect" will be replacing our former "Grader Gang." This new program will be hosting a variety of events starting with "Kids Play-Parents Connect", an event where kids play and/or join in a guided craft and parents/caregivers connect with each other.

Saturday, April 27 • 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Valley Friendship Club Hub, 5620 Memorial Ave. No., Stillwater

For more information and to see upcoming events visit www.valleyfriendshipclub.org/event or www.facebook.com/ValleyFriendshipClub. You can join the Stillwater Area Special Needs Community Facebook page for a closed on-line chat/Q & A. For questions email us at: info@ValleyFriendshipClub.org.

The Mission of the Valley Friendship Club is to promote and provide safe, accessible social opportunities while fostering friendships. To this end, we aim to enhance community connections, empower club participants to strengthen important life skills, and create greater social independence.

• PBS Character Meet and Greet

Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) recognizes that families with disabled children are often inadvertently excluded from fun, family-friendly events. We want to help change that by introducing our sensory-friendly hour at Second Saturdays. Haven't heard of Second Saturdays? Each month TPT opens up our studios in

continued on page 5

continued from Nick Boyer: In-Home Fitness and Nutrition Support on page 4

while others focus on building healthy life skills, improving nutrition habits, increasing activity level, or relieving stress. Oftentimes, exercise helps them build confidence and become more social. Fitness training has also been a great platform to help with behavior issues a few of my clients struggle with.

Please contact me with any questions or to schedule an initial meeting to learn more about fitness and nutrition support. Looking forward to meeting with you!

651-246-0259

nickboyerfitness@gmail.com

nickboyerfitness.org/specialneeds

.....
**A New App Available to Find Care for Your Loved One
SPECIAL CARE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS**



Meet first of it's kind - disability

care in an easy app.

This application can assist families in finding care for their loved one. They offer qualified care givers on demand.

"Our care dates aren't just a break for you - They are something special for your loved one too. In just one App you can find your care companion. Schedule care dates and update your Joshin Care Plan all from your phone.

<https://joshin.com>

.....
Parent Lead Housing Group
Parents interested in participating on a team to design and develop housing for adults with special needs are invited to join a new group.

continued on page 6

continued from Community Activities on page 4

lowertown St. Paul for a morning of PBS Kids cartoons on the big screen, meet & greets with PBS Kids characters like Daniel Tiger, Sid the Science Kid, and Buddy the Dinosaur, and fun activities like instrument making and carnival games. If that weren't enough, the *SciGirls* squad are always on hand with all sorts of STEM-related games and activities to educate your child.



Want the icing on the cake? Second Saturdays is a free, family-friendly event. You can always show your support by including a donation to TPT with your RSVP, but it's entirely optional. [RSVP NOW](#).

What to expect from TPT's Sensory-Friendly Second Saturdays
We want your family to feel relaxed and included. Expect lower volumes, lighting, and crowds. Instead of standing in line to meet your favorite PBS character, they will wander the room to say 'hello'. Kids of all ages are welcome and our space is entirely wheelchair accessible.

We're always looking to improve! If you have any questions or concerns regarding our sensory-friendly events, please reach out to us at tptevents@tpt.org.

We hope to see you sometime soon! Check back at our [Sensory-Friendly Second Saturdays event page](#) to RSVP for the next event!

• **Sensory-Friendly Performances at Stages Theatre**



Sensory-friendly performances are designed for children on the autism spectrum or others with sensory sensitivities. House lights will be on, sound levels will be lowered, and crowds are minimized for these judgement-free, "shush-free" performances.

Upcoming 2019 Sensory-Friendly Performances:

- *The Most Magnificent Thing*: Saturday, May 4 • 10:00 a.m.
- *The Most Magnificent Thing*: Wednesday, May 8 • 10:00 a.m.
- *Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka TYA*: Saturday, July 13 • 10:00 a.m.
- *James and the Giant Peach*: Saturday, September 28 • 10:00 a.m.
- *Spookley the Square Pumpkin*: Saturday, October 5 • 10:00 a.m.
- *Elf the Musical, Jr.*: Saturday, November 30 • 10:00 a.m.

2020 Sensory-Friendly Performances:

- *The Dot*: Saturday, January 25, 2020 • 10:00 a.m.
- *Iron Hearted Violet*: Saturday, March 14, 2020 • 10:00 a.m.
- *The Day You Begin*: Saturday, April 25, 2020 • 10:00 a.m.
- *A Different Pond*: Saturday, May 2, 2020 • 10:00 a.m.
- *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*: Saturday, June 27, 2020 • 10:00 a.m.

Tickets for sensory-friendly performances are not available online. Please call the Box Office at 952-979-1111, option 4. For more information about sensory friendly programming, visit www.stagestheatre.org or call 952-979-1111.

• **Sensory-Friendly Sundays at the Science Museum of Minnesota**

At the Science Museum, we know that all visitors learn differently. During Sensory Friendly hours, individuals and families can enjoy a quieter, less sensory-stimulating museum experience.

continued on page 6

continued from Parent Lead Housing Group on page 5

The group meets on a monthly basis right now, but may meet more frequently in the future.

If you would like to participate, please email Erin Boyle via: erin.boyle@co.washington.mn.us

Vacation Option



Search Beyond Adventures

Founded in 1979, Search Beyond Adventures provides all-inclusive escorted vacations for travelers with disabilities and special needs, ages 17 and up. Most of our travelers have developmental disabilities, although some participants may also have a physical disability. Many of our tours can accommodate wheelchair users.

We have six program divisions. Our main [Search Beyond Adventures tours](#) is the largest and offers tours all over the world. For customers in the Minnesota and western Wisconsin areas, we also operate three to four day weekend [Potato Tours](#). Likewise, we offer three day weekend [Sweet Pickle Tours](#) throughout the New England region. For travelers needing a high level of assistance (1:1 ratio), we operate five to six day [My Vacation](#). Check out [My Florida Vacation](#) for individualized supervised retreats in the Orlando, Florida area.

Tours operate with one staff escort for every one to five participants. Our staff assist with participants'

continued on page 7

continued from Community Activities on page 5



See a lights-up, sound-down Omnitheater show at 9:00 a.m., visit the exhibit galleries before they open to the public, retreat to a designated quiet space to relax and recharge, and enjoy lighter crowds. Don't forget to take advantage of the [features we offer to visitors every day](#) to foster a positive learning environment.

Ticket prices range from \$8.95 to \$24.95. Discounts are available for individuals, families, and groups with limited incomes. Admission is free for working personal care attendants when they're visiting with a client; [learn more](#).

Additional upcoming Sensory Friendly Sundays:

- Sunday, April 21 • 9:00 a.m. • Showing of *Cuba*
- Sunday, May 19 • 9:00 a.m. • Showing of *National Parks Adventure*
- Sunday, June 16 • 9:00 a.m. • Showing of *Apollo: First Steps*
- Sunday, July 21 9:00 a.m. • Showing of *Apollo: First Steps*

We have a variety of tools available to help our visitors with sensory issues make the most of their visit. Ask at the Exhibits Entrance for sound dampening headphones, a timer, or a kit containing headphones, fidgets, gloves, and sunglasses.

For questions or more information, visit www.smm.org or call 651-221-9444.

• Sensory Jump at Pump It Up in Eden Prairie

During this evening event, the play areas are reserved for kids on the autism spectrum and their families. Kids have a great time meeting new friends. Jump, slide, and play with sensory-friendly games in a safe and controlled atmosphere.



Third Tuesday of every month • \$7 per child

See our calendar on www.pumpitupparty.com for our schedule.

• Sensory Nights at Cheap Skate

To celebrate National Autism Awareness Month, this year Cheap Skate is partnering with Autism Society of Minnesota for a month long of family fun! Every Tuesday in April, we will host Sensory Awareness Night from 6:00-9:00 p.m.



What does that mean? No flashing lights, no fog, no loud music. These skating and bouncing sessions are designed for

those with special needs in mind. Wheelchairs are always welcomed, as well as parents walking on the skating floor to help.

During the month of April we also want to create awareness by asking your help in supporting the Autism Society of Minnesota. Each donation is tax deductible and 100% of the net proceeds benefit the AUSM. We will be accepting donations for puzzle pieces with 3 options:

- **\$1.00 donation:** Name on puzzle piece displayed in rink entry/exitway
- **\$5.00 donation:** Name on puzzle piece displayed in rink entry/exitway + free skating or bouncing admission ticket (up to a \$6.99 value).

continued on page 7

continued from Vacation Option on page 6

needs so generally a personal care attendant is not needed. Prices include EVERYTHING: all activities, accommodations, meals, transportation, tour staff, and tips.

Our staff are BOTH human service professionals and travel service professionals. A successful tour must synthesis great people skills, disability knowledge, AND logistical coordination with travel resources.

Finally, if you're comparing us with other special vacation providers, please check our low prices. You'll be amazed at the value you receive with Search Beyond Adventures. We can offer you great, quality tours to more destinations for a much better price than others. Our higher volume means more destination choices and greater savings for you! We guarantee your satisfaction! If you are not satisfied with your tour we'll replace it.

For more information, visit www.searchbeyond.com

Camperships

Leisure Activities for Developmentally Disabled Adults (LADDA) Fund of the St. Croix Valley Foundation

The LADDA Fund of the St. Croix Valley Foundation is once again offering partial campership for persons attending a special needs camp or licensed leisure/travel trip. *The LADDA fund was developed to assist adults (persons 18 or older) with financial assistance to attend leisure/recreational programs.*

Qualifying applicants will receive the amount of \$200.00 toward

continued on page 8

continued from Community Activities on page 6

- **\$20.00 donation:** Family name on puzzle piece displayed in rink entry/exitway + 4 free skating AND bouncing admission tickets with roller skate rental (up to a \$51.99 value).

Sensory Awareness Nights don't stop in April. **Cheap Skate will host Sensory Nights every first Tuesday night of each month going forward**, so mark your calendars. For more information, check our [Facebook Events page](#), visit <https://cheapskatecr.com>, or call 763-427-8980.

- **Special Adventures Events**
- **Cinco De Mayo Dinner Dance:**
Sunday, May 19 • 4:00-7:00 p.m.
Gethsemane Lutheran Church,
2410 Stillwater Rd. E., St. Paul

This FREE event is for special needs adults 18 years or older. *To attend, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you [register online](#) no later than May 17 so we will be sure to have enough food and space for everyone!*

- **"A Night to Remember" Special Needs Prom: Saturday, June 22 • 5:00-8:00 p.m.**
East Ridge High School, 4200 Pioneer Dr., Woodbury

This FREE event is for special needs adults 18 years or older. We invite you to come dance the night away with us at this very special event! We have a whole lot in store for you so get ready to have the time of your life! You will be treated like royalty from the moment you walk in the door! We will be serving a variety of snacks and beverages at this event. *To attend, it is REQUIRED that you [register online](#) no later than June 15.*

It is our pleasure to be holding free monthly events through our organization! To find out about our monthly events and register please visit our website at <https://specialadventures.net>. Please contact our hospitality coordinator Rose LeClaire at 651-767-2990 with any questions you might have and don't forget to like our Facebook page!

- **Special Needs Workshop Service**
A worship service just for you! Come join us for this very special service each and every Sunday going forward! We have named this service the *Angel Service*. Each week you will have a chance to help out with our service! You do not have to do this but if you want to be more involved this would be great too! We look forward to seeing you there and God bless you all!

Every Sunday • Noon-1:00 p.m.
Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 2410 Stillwater Rd. E., St. Paul

If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Rankins at 612-839-4799
Visit our website at www.geth.org.

- **Story Time at Wild Rumpus**
Join us for **Sensory-Friendly Story Time on the second Thursday of each month from 9:30-10:00 a.m.!** *While all are welcome, this story time is especially meant for those with sensory sensitivities.* For all others, please join us for [Tail Time](#) every Monday at 10:30 a.m.



continued on page 8

continued from Camperships on page 7

a campership/recreational experience. Qualifying applicant determination will be based on the following criteria:

- Individuals with developmental disabilities (a lifelong disability attributed to mental or a combination of mental and physical impairment) at least 18 years old.
- The applicant shall be the financial responsibility of Washington County or the applicant or legal guardian shall live within the boundaries of Stillwater Area School District #834.

To request an application, you may call:

Portia Andrews at 651-436-8321
Jackie Ulrich at 651-439-4837

.....
Partners in Policymaking is now ready to accept applications for its 2019-2020 training!

Nationally recognized leadership and advocacy skills training offered for Minnesotans with disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities.

Partners in Policymaking® program invites Minnesotans to apply for no cost, comprehensive, confidence-building training in disability law and policies.

Minnesotans with disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities are encouraged to apply for a comprehensive advocacy training course, [Partners in Policymaking® program](#) at no cost. Starting in September, the nationally recognized leadership training offers eight sessions over nine months.

continued on page 9

continued from Community Activities on page 7

What makes Sensory-Friendly Story Time special?

- Story Time will take place before the store opens to the general public.
- No music until after the store opens...except for the songs we'll sing together!
- Small fidget objects will be available for children to hold if they choose.
- There will be a clear schedule for story time with visual cues.
- As with all of our story times, this is a no judgement zone! We all have unique needs and ways of expressing ourselves, and we at Wild Rumpus welcome and celebrate those differences.

For more information, visit us at www.wildrumpusbooks.com or contact us at info@wildrumpusbooks.com or 612-920-5005.

Camp Opportunities

• 21 Roots Farm Summer Camps



21 Roots Farm is a place for children and adults with developmental disabilities to connect with nature.

• Farm Camps

Children and young adults will have an interactive, educational experience at 21 Roots Farm. They will have fun learning about animal and plant care, growing and harvesting food. Nature walks, music, art, and other sensory activities will also be part of programming. *Participants will bring their own bag lunch. Snacks provided.*

Week 1: **July 8-11** (ages 8-12) Week 3: **July 29-August 1** (ages 8-12)
Week 2: **July 22-25** (ages 12-17 & 18+) Week 4: **August 12-15** (ages 8-12)

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (Monday-Thursday)

Cost: \$245 per week

Ratio: 15 participants / 1:2 ratio. **Campers needing a 1:1 ratio must bring a parent or PCA.*

• Fridays on the Farm

Join us six Fridays this summer where participating farmers will experience a variety of agricultural opportunities at 21 Roots Farm. Farmers will learn about plant identification, composting, and harvesting through our raised bed gardens, apple orchard, and prairie. Additionally our goats, chickens, bees, and horses will provide opportunities to explore animal husbandry. *Participants will bring their own bag lunch. Snacks provided.*

July 12, 19, & 26 AND August 2, 9, & 16 • 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Group 1: Ages 12-17

Group 2: Adults 18+

Cost: \$365 for six Fridays

Ratio: 15 participants / 1:4 ratio. **Campers needing a 1:1 ratio must bring a parent or PCA.*

• Wednesday Explorers

Join us on Wednesday evenings at 21 Roots Farm. Come once or attend all eight sessions. Adults will have an opportunity to learn more about a specific area of farming like campfire cooking, bee keeping, herb gardens, composting, and much more. Classes are open to anyone interested. Parents and guardians are invited to stay and join a discussion group/time for socialization or bring work/something to read.

continued on page 9

continued from ...Partners in Policymaking... on page 8

"Our goal is that graduates gain a clear understanding of disability law and policies. The training increases their self-confidence in advocating for their needs," said Dr. Colleen Wieck, executive director of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. "As they have learned to speak up for people with disabilities, many have become leaders in their own communities." The Minnesota-inspired program is also offered in most states and several foreign countries.

This highly acclaimed and finely-tuned leadership training taps into national experts and utilizes group participation. Described by many as life-changing, in its 32-year history, more than 1,000 Minnesotans have become leaders in their own communities. Participants become effective advocates for themselves, their children, and others with disabilities.

Sessions cover the history of disability and self-advocacy movements, inclusive education, supported living, competitive employment, and avenues to influence county, state, and federal legislative processes. For convenience, the monthly two-day sessions are held on Fridays and Saturdays, from September to May (with no session in December). The March session is on a Sunday and Monday, when participants prepare for, and meet with legislators at the Capitol.

Costs for the Partners program are covered by a federal grant. Child care and respite allowances are given, and overnight accommodations are provided for those who travel from outside

continued on page 10

continued from Camp Opportunities on page 8

July 10, 17, 24, & 31 AND August 7, 14, 21, & 28 • 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

(*Plan to arrive by 5:45 p.m.)

Ages 18+

Cost: \$25 per evening

Ratio: 15 participants per evening / 1:4 ratio minimum.

We are located at 10361 110th St. in Grant, MN, just northeast of White Bear Lake and Dellwood, 30 minutes from downtown Minneapolis, 25 minutes from downtown St. Paul. Carpooling/shuttle van from Shoreview (Lexington and Hwy 96 area) will be available.

To register and for more information visit our website at www.21rootsfarm.org or email us at 21rootsfarm@gmail.com.

• AuSM Summer Activities Catalog

Register for some summer fun! Packed with information on summer social skills programs, residential and daily camps, exciting event opportunities, and more, the [2019 AuSM Summer Activities Catalog](#) is available online.



AuSM Summer Social Skills Classes:

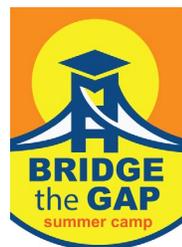
- [MN Zoo: Disguises and Surprises](#)
June 17–21 (ages 8–11)
- [Lowry: Outdoor Adventure Skills](#)
June 18–21 (ages 13–18)
- [AuSM: On the Town Wednesdays](#)
June 19–July 31 (ages 14–26)
- [Como Zoo: Global Adventures](#)
July 8–12 (ages 8–12)
- [AuSM: On the Town Adventure](#)
Thursdays: July 11–August 8
(ages 14–26) *Waiting List
- [MN Zoo: Ocean Commotion](#)
July 15–19 (ages 12–15)
- [Eastman: Outdoor Adventure Skills](#) July 16–19 (ages 13–18)
- [Toneworks Camp Art for All](#)

July 22–26 (ages 10–21)

- [ComedySportz Improv Skills](#)
July 29–August 2 (ages 14–26)
- [Como Zoo: Intro to Animal Care](#)
July 29–August 2 (ages 13–18)
- [AuSM Artists at Mia](#)
August 5–9 (ages 11–18)
- [MN Zoo: Zoo Crew and Zoo Design](#) August 5–9 (ages 16–19)
- [AuSM: Monthly Birthday Celebration & Game Night](#)
Third Wed. of month: May–Oct.
(ages 18+)
- [AuSM: Book Club](#) See dates online (ages 14+)

• Bridge the Gap Summer Camp

Bridge the Gap Summer Camp offers students, entering grades 3–12 unique opportunities for enrichment, advancement, and fun in academics and essential social and life skills. We have ample opportunities to explore interests, develop important skills, and become more prepared for the next level of academic challenges or to maintain skills that were gained during the school year



All of our Bridge the Gap programs are taught by Academy of Whole Learning's highly trained staff who are devoted to working with students with autism spectrum disorder or related learning differences. The goals for Bridge the Gap Summer Camp are to provide a variety of options for growth academically, artistically, and socially in an environment that is safe, caring, and fun for students of all ages. Although we specialize in educating students

continued on page 10

continued from ...Partners in Policymaking... on page 9

the metro area to attend. Mileage is reimbursed and meals are provided.

Sessions are held at the Crowne Plaza Aire, at 3 Appletree Square in Bloomington, near the Mall of America and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

Limited to 40 Minnesotans, participants are selected by a panel of Partners graduates and representatives of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. **The first session for the 2019-2020 program year is September 13-14.**

Local experts and nationally recognized leaders in school inclusion, community organizing, governmental processes, and disability issues are among the presenters. [Applications](#) are due by July 8.

"This program is based on the belief that systems change is best brought about through the efforts of those most affected by them, and we seek to arm these individuals with the tools needed to be successful in the public policy arena," said Wieck.

Those selected to participate in the program must attend all sessions and complete homework assignments. For further information, or to get an application form, go to <https://bit.ly/2VBjuw4> or contact Brenton Rice at brenton@together.com or 612-242-6589.

The Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities introduced the Partners in Policymaking program in 1987, and, through expansion to other states and countries, has trained more than 27,000 people worldwide.

continued from Camp Opportunities on page 9

with autism spectrum disorder or related learning differences, our Summer Camp is open to all students.

For more information, visit www.academyofwholelearning.org.

• Camp Knutson

Camp Knutson is a supportive, medically-sound camp for individuals with disabilities, medical conditions, and other identified needs. We partner with other organizations to host camps for youth and adults with identified needs such as Autism, heart disease, skin conditions, Down syndrome, burn survivors, HIV/AIDS, and youth experiencing homelessness. Our beautiful, updated 30-acre campus is nestled



Camp Knutson

between the pristine waters of Lower Whitefish and Big Trout Lakes. Open year-round, our modern facilities and beautiful north-woods setting make us the perfect location for retreats, conferences, social gatherings, meetings, or training events September through May.

For more information, visit www.lssmn.org/campknutson.

• In the Company of Kids Theatre and Summer Camp Program

Adaptive Theater Programs

Step into the spotlight and come shine on stage! If you've been "bit by the acting bug," come join us for an exciting adventure in theater! Actors of all skill levels are welcome, all you need is a little curiosity and a love for performing and having fun! Participants will enjoy learning about acting, dance, voice and speech, stage presence, comedy, improvisation, art activities, and much more. Coupled with the guidance of our teachers, the curriculum fosters a "creative state" with which students are empowered to realize their personal and artistic potential. Wonderful for building self-esteem, confidence, communication skills, teambuilding, and social skills. Our teachers are specialists in their fields and have extensive experience working with children and adults of all abilities.



Every program is designed to meet the needs of the individuals served:

- **Senior Programs for All Abilities Including Alzheimer's/Dementia** (Certified Dementia Communication Specialist)
- **Senior Body and Mind Class "Ageless Grace" Educator**
- **Adaptive Theater and Dance Programs for Adults with Special Needs** (Autism Education Professional On Staff)
- **Children's Dance and Theater Adaptive Classes**
- **Summer Adaptive Camps:** Ages 7-16

For more information visit www.cokartscenter.com or call 952-220-1676.

• Mount Olivet Rolling Acres' Discover Summer Camp



Mount Olivet Rolling Acres' Discover Summer Camp is a therapeutic day camp for youth on the autism spectrum. This unique camp offers small group sizes (6-12 campers per session) for **kids ages 9-16** and is designed for children who need an alternative to traditional summer day camp programs, including those with significant behavior challenges. The program has a structure that is socially engaging to youth

continued on page 11

Let's Go Fishing

Let's Go Fishing has developed its mission over time. Early on we felt that we best served our communities by focusing on the camaraderie of bringing older adults on fishing trips, sharing the fun of the catch. As our organization developed, we came to realize that by reaching out to older adults, veterans, and the disabled, we not only were able to bring fun but simply by bringing people to nature we were contributing to their health and well-being.



There has been much written about the beneficial effects that nature has on our mental and physical health and so we have seen it proven true time and time again. Therefore we made an important change to our mission statement, encompassing the factors of health and well-being in what we do.

For more information, visit our website: <http://lgfws.com>.

How to receive additional issues of Community Links:

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the Community Links newsletter, go to www.co.washington.mn.us, click on the "Notify Me" tab, enter your email address, and click on the envelope next to Community Links Newsletter.

Contact:

Article Submissions:

Denise Steans
denise.steans@co.washington.mn.us
651-430-4168

continued from Camp Opportunities on page 10

but has the flexibility to meet individual interests with regard to preferences and environment. Program emphasis is on increasing knowledge in areas of interest, while building social skills, learning coping skills, and increasing physical fitness, all in a low stress environment.

The location is on our campus on Schutz Lake in Victoria. It is a picturesque and serene environment that provides the perfect backdrop for a comfortable, camp-like experience. Facilities include a computer lab with multiple stations, a gymnasium with fitness and sensory equipment, a waterfront with beach, boats, and fishing, extensive grounds with an in-ground trampoline, and a recreation rooms with multiple games and activities.

2019 schedule:

- **June 10-14:** Mine "Kraft"
- **July 22-26:** Science Exploration
- **July 29-August 2:** Robotic Fun
- **August 5-9:** Lego

Camp runs: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Cost: \$675 per week. Camperships may be available to families in need. *Before and after camp care are available at an additional cost.*

Contact us for more information or download the [2019 Discover Summer Camp Application](#). **If you are interested in any open camp dates please contact Stephanie Kohl directly: Skohl@Mtolivet-MORA.org or 952-401-4872.*

• Summer Camp Adventure Awaits at AuSM Camps!

AuSM camps are tailored for youth and adults with autism. Parents and caregivers can rest assured knowing that their campers are being cared for by highly trained, experienced staff, while campers make memories that last a lifetime. AuSM camps are available for individuals ages 6 and up who are AuSM members. Camp offerings include a day camp where campers arrive each morning and leave each afternoon and two residential camps where campers stay several days and nights. Camp activities are subject to change. *Due to the high demand for residential camps, campers may attend only one week of residential camp.* Campers may attend one or both sessions of Wahode Day Camp.



View the [2019 AuSM Summer Camp flyer and printable registration form](#) or the [online registration form](#). [Registration](#) is open.

For more information, visit our website at www.ausm.org.

• True Friends Camp

Camp at True Friends provides individuals the opportunity to explore their interests, build confidence, enhance self-esteem, and meet new friends, all while having a blast enjoying the Minnesota summer. We are honored to serve you, your family, and the greater community with life-changing experiences. Thank you for choosing True Friends for your next adventure.

Signing up for camp is easier than ever with our [online registration system](#). For returning campers, log-in to your account and apply online! *Summer Camp registration is now open.* Check out our [catalog](#) or download a pdf from our website: <https://truefriends.org>.