



Adair County SB40 Developmental Disability Board
314 East McPherson Street
Kirksville, MO 63501

Postage
Information

X

You can help support activities and classes at the Community Learning Center by donating to the [Adair County DD Link](https://sb40life.org)
Visit <https://sb40life.org> or scan this QR Code



Come Join Us!

After kicking off Developmental Disability Month at the 16th Annual Community Engagement Conference on March 1st, Melissa and Angela would love to have you to visit them at the Community Learning Center (CLC)! The Center is a great place to meet new people, learn new skills, learn how to be your own best advocate, and meet your sensory needs while having fun. The Center is open to the community, as space allows, for most classes and activities. You can visit the Center Tuesday - Friday from 8AM-5PM and take part in the many scheduled activities and classes available, use the Sensory Room, or just hang out. You can also make an appointment to visit on a Monday by contacting Melissa at the CLC by calling 660-665-9400.

In March, they have some fun activities lined up for you! The Health and Exercise Students from TSU will continue to lead Exercise Your Mind on Tuesdays. This is a great activity to keep your mind healthy and working its best through fun, themed activities. Each Wednesday, Miss Bre with the Adair County Public Library will be here for story time to share stories and a craft, which is fun for visitors of all ages. On Tuesday, March 18th, Holly with the Missouri Department of Conservation will be here for Nature Time. Come learn about the water cycle and make rain in a jar!

If you would prefer to receive this mailing as an email, please contact Melissa (clc@sb40life.org)



Developmental Disability Board

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DD Resource Center
314 E. McPherson Street
Kirksville, MO 63501
(660) 665-9400
sb40@sb40life.org

Community Learning Center
1107 Country Club Drive
Kirksville, MO 63501
(660) 660-9400
clc@sb40life.org

Website: <https://sb40life.org>

March 2025

Sean's Scoop!



Building a Stronger Community: Working Together to Support People with Disabilities

We are fortunate to live where we do, and I think sometimes we underestimate what an amazing community we have. In our small, close-knit community in Northeast Missouri, we are lucky to live in a place where neighbors help neighbors, and people care for one another. One of the most important ways we can make our community even stronger is by coming together to support people with developmental disabilities and their families. By engaging with each other, forming partnerships, showing compassion, collaborating, and educating ourselves, we can create a place where everyone, no matter their abilities, can thrive. I would argue we do this better than anywhere else in Missouri, and its important to recognize this while always striving to grow even stronger in this area.

The Power of Community Engagement

Community engagement means getting involved and working together to make things better for everyone. When we engage with each other, we build stronger relationships and show that we care about the well-being of everyone in our town. In Kirksville and Northeast Missouri, there are many ways we can engage with people who have developmental disabilities, such as volunteering at local events, offering a hand when needed, or just taking the time to learn about the challenges others face. The more we engage, the more we can create an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and valued.

Building Partnerships for Success

One of the best ways to support people with developmental disabilities is through partnerships. In our community, schools, local businesses, healthcare providers, and organizations can all work together to share resources and provide services. For example, local schools can collaborate with nonprofit organizations to offer programs where children with developmental disabilities learn alongside their classmates. This helps break down barriers and promotes understanding, showing everyone the importance of inclusion. When different groups work together, they can make sure that people with disabilities have the resources they need to succeed.

Partnerships don't just happen; they take effort. But when schools, businesses, and other organizations work hand-in-hand, they can make a real difference in improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families. This is what makes our community strong. *(Continued on Page 3)*

Spotlight Awards



February's Spotlight Award - Community Partnership Spotlight

Adair County SB40 has awarded Cristal Peterson, with the support of Learning Opportunities Quality Works, the February 2025 Community Partnership Spotlight Award for her amazing work with a man named Billy in our community. Billy was recently homeless and without any natural or family support, and it took a combination of Cristal's great work, SB40's advocacy and resources, as well as our amazing community, coming together to collaborate and support him to find the resources needed to finally find stable housing as well as move him towards providing for himself through his amazing artistry (see pics below as samples of Billy's amazing work), and looking into other employment opportunities as well.

Cristal is currently an Admin Assistant with Learning Opportunities, where she has worked for years. She is a wife and mother of two, Elana and Vivian, and per her supervisor, Mark Wouters, Cristal has been an awesome staff and has worked for LOQW for 8 ½ years, the first 5 of those as a Direct Support Professional. She has a huge heart and has supported people with disabilities with a variety of skills helping them increase their independence, including assisting some in applying for college, setting up and managing their MO ABLE accounts, as well as helping complete paperwork related to benefits, housing, etc.

Cristal and LOQW were nominated for this award by Service Coordinator, Andy Magruder, who has also worked tirelessly to link Billy to resources in our community. Magruder stated in his nomination: "Cristal, Mark, William (in the pic above) and the rest of the staff at LOQW have been instrumental in assisting and supporting one of our homeless individuals in the community. They have supported him with finding a home, applying for social service benefits, assisting at Vocational Rehabilitation to find a job, advocating at medical appointments, providing transportation to medical appointments, and helping with resolving all issues that have come up. They have also helped at a moment's notice on numerous occasions and the Adair County SB40 are so thankful to have them as a community partner. We would like to nominate them for a Community Partnership Award and so thankful for their hard work and dedication to serving our people."

Sean Jacob, Executive Director of Adair County SB40, enthusiastically agreed with the nomination. "Cristal has gone way above and beyond with her work and advocacy for this person, whose needs are significant, and we shudder to think of where he would be today if not for all the ones who worked together for his good. I want to give a shoutout and thank you to all the financial aid and other support assistance given to this person from our community, which included Cristal and LOQW, Life Church, Cornerstone Church, Grace Community Bible Church, Mary Immaculate Catholic Church, Community Action Agency, Future Business Leaders of America at the Kirksville Schools did a fundraiser, Dr. Julie Lochbaum, Adair SB40, among others. Also want to thank Days Inn, who gave some excellent rates to help while housing options were being explored. The community came together for this man, and Billy is extremely grateful."

If you would like to nominate a great candidate for a monthly Spotlight Award, Adair County SB40 accepts nominations. Anyone can make a nomination. Nominations can be made in any of the four following categories:

- Kids Inclusion Spotlight Award for children in kindergarten - 8th grade
- Youth Leadership Spotlight Award for youth in grades 9-12
- Community Volunteer/Partner Spotlight Award (any age)
- Entrepreneur or Employee Spotlight Award (any age)

In March 2025, all monthly Spotlight Award winners will be recognized at the annual awards banquet. Nominations can be made throughout the year by visiting the Adair County SB40 website or by contacting a SB40 staff member to assist you at (660) 665 - 9400. You can also find more information about the four nomination categories by visiting Adair County SB40's website, <https://www.sb40life.org>.



William McCoy, Cristal Peterson, Mark Wouters



Andy Magruder, Billy Griffith, Mark Wouters, William McCoy



Artwork by Billy Griffith



Artwork by Billy Griffith

Sean's Scoop Continued

Compassion Makes a Difference

Compassion is the act of caring for others and showing kindness. In Northeast Missouri, we have seen so many examples of compassion. Neighbors help each other out, classmates show kindness to each other, and businesses give back to the community. For people with developmental disabilities, compassion is especially important. Families who have a loved one with a disability often face extra challenges, and a little kindness can go a long way.

When we show compassion, we help people feel included, understood, and supported. It can be something simple, like offering to carry someone's groceries, or taking the time to talk to someone who may feel left out. Compassion makes our community a better place for everyone, and it helps people with disabilities and their families feel that they are not alone.

Collaboration for Change

Collaboration is when different people or groups work together to achieve a common goal. When it comes to supporting people with developmental disabilities, collaboration is key. By working together, we can advocate for better services, support, and resources for individuals and families. We can also push for changes that make public spaces, like parks and playgrounds, more accessible.

Collaboration is about making sure everyone's voice is heard. It's about coming together to create a world where people of all abilities have equal opportunities to succeed. In Northeast Missouri, when we collaborate, we can make real changes that will benefit everyone in our community.

Education: Learning to Help Everyone Succeed

Education is another important tool we can use to build a stronger community. The more we learn about developmental disabilities, the better equipped we are to understand the needs of others. When schools, businesses, and families work together to educate themselves, it helps remove the fear and misunderstanding that can sometimes come with differences.

In Northeast Missouri, Adair SB40's Community Learning Center, schools and other organizations can and do offer programs that teach students and adults about the challenges faced by people with disabilities. These programs can show how we can all work together to make life easier for everyone. When we understand more, we are better able to help.

Moving Forward Together

In Northeast Missouri, we have the chance to build a community where everyone, no matter their abilities, can thrive. By engaging with each other, forming partnerships, showing compassion, collaborating on solutions, and educating ourselves, we can make a big difference. The more we work together, the stronger our community will be. Together, we can create a place where people with developmental disabilities and their families feel supported, included, and valued.

One suggested way for you to practically follow through on the intention to move forward in the areas described above would be to come, learn and participate in the Community Engagement Conference on 3/1/25 at William Matthew Middle School from 8a-4:30p. It's an all-day event, it's free, it's informative, and you can come for as much as you have time for.

Let's keep up the great work and continue to make Northeast Missouri a place where kindness and cooperation help everyone reach their full potential. When we support each other, there is no limit to what we can achieve together.

