



Washington  
State  
Independent  
Living Council

## Quarterly Newsletter

9<sup>th</sup> Edition | September 2020

### DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

BY KIM CONNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

With so many important issues being brought to the forefront of our daily conversations, this year continues to prove to be an opportune time to affect lasting and meaningful change in the lives of individuals with disabilities. All the little acts we do to advocate and educate add up!

I have spent my life, both personally and professionally, working for social justice. The Black Lives Matter movement calls on each of us to examine ourselves, our communities, and the system, and demand justice and equity for all. I still have more to learn as I dismantle my own biases and do better. So how do we address the intersectionality between the Disability community and the Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) communities and elevate the discussion for equity and human rights? What do we do with that knowledge to better promote the Independent Living (IL) philosophy in Washington state? Is it possible that IL means something different to someone who is indigenous, to someone in the Black community or LGBTQ+ community?

Recently, I attended the virtual National Conference on Independent Living (NCIL). Many workshops were facilitated by members who experience the intersectionality of being a person with a disability, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+. Their anti-racism knowledge, personal experiences, and practical tools emphasized ways we can all be more cognizant of our racial biases, how to be an anti-racist, and how the work we do in our SILC and Centers for Independent Living (CILs) should and can incorporate these values.

What I heard loud and clear is: Don't ask me to be only disabled when I walk through your doors. We are Black, Latinix, Asian, Indigenous, Queer. This is our "wholeness", make safe and welcoming space for all of who we are. WASILC hears you and is committed to ensuring that all people with disabilities are treated fairly and are welcome in the IL movement.

Finally, I'd like to remind everyone that if you have not responded to the 2020 U.S. Census, you still can! Go to [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov) and complete the questionnaire. Making sure everyone is counted is another great way to advocate for the disability community! [Disability Rights Washington](https://www.dhs.gov/disability-rights-washington) provides informational videos in English, Spanish, and ASL, to explain the importance of Census participation.

### In This Issue:

- ◆ Page 1—Director's update
- ◆ Page 2— Coming soon: Disability Awareness Month
- ◆ Page 2—New Council Members announced
- ◆ Page 2— PIDS Emergency Training Conference
- ◆ Page 3— NCIL Conference Recap
- ◆ Page 3— September is Emergency Preparedness Month
- ◆ Page 4— About WASILC & CIL Contact info

## COMING SOON TO AN ADVOCATE NEAR YOU: OCTOBER IS DISABILITY AWARENESS MONTH

All next month, WASILC will highlight some of the many accomplishments, contributions, and advancements made by notable people with disabilities. And we'll continue the 30th anniversary celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)! Visit [wasilc.org](http://wasilc.org) to read stories sure to inspire, and follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wasilc) to join the conversation and share these stories with others.

### WASILC Welcomes Newly Appointed Council Members!

In early August, Governor Inslee appointed four individuals to be the newest WASILC council members: Ramona 'Mona' Fuerstenau and Ricardo Funes, who will both serve as advocates of and for Individuals with Disabilities; Kimberly Meck, to serve as the new CIL Director representative; and Tricia Eyerly, the new Ex-Officio with the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB). Their introductory meeting will be the October quarterly meeting. Please give them a warm WASILC welcome, and look for their bios to come in the next edition of the newsletter.

## Planning Today for a Safer Tomorrow: Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness Conference

Free virtual conference is slated for November 17-18, 2020

For the past two months the conference planning committee has worked together to present a conference that will be facilitated by the Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies (PIDS). Emergency management professionals, disability advocates, and the disability community are encouraged to attend.



A nationally recognized keynote speaker will address us the first day. Workshops will address vital issues regarding emergency preparedness at the local and statewide levels alike. The conference will also include a panel discussion.

The conference is free and will be presented virtually on Tuesday, Nov. 17 from 8:30am-4:30pm and Wednesday, Nov. 18 from 8:30am-12:00pm.

## NCIL CONFERENCE RECAP: EVOLUTION OF OUR REVOLUTION

The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) held its 2020 annual conference online this year. Normally held in Washington, DC over a five-day span, this year's virtual iteration had workshops spaced out over a three-week period. This webinar format afforded numerous WASILC council members, staff, and CIL staff and directors to attend.

Amidst a global pandemic and considering the Black Lives Matter movement, conference workshops shifted focus to be on timely issues such as "Becoming an Anti-Racist Disability Advocate", "Fighting Disability Discrimination During the Covid-19 Pandemic", "Death by Institutional Bias", "The Role of the CIL in Addressing Racial Injustice", and more.

Ryan Nabors, WASILC Council member, attended several workshops, and reported that he especially enjoyed the ADA 30th anniversary celebration and sessions which discussed how SILCs and CILs can move toward diversity and intersectionality. Ryan shared that a presentation given by Sheryl Grossman "gave a lot of good examples of how the ADA allows employees flexibility with employment. This was explained as flexible time to take medications, attend doctor appointments, and other needs that people might not consider that they don't have disabilities."

Hill visits with elected representatives were also held online or via phone, which allowed more SILC and CIL staff to attend than in years past.

## September is Emergency Preparedness Month

Disasters Don't Wait. Make Your Plan Today

- Week 1 (Sept. 1—5): [Make a plan](#)
- Week 2 (Sept. 6—12): [Build a kit](#)
- Week 3 (Sept. 13—19): [Prepare for disasters specific to your area](#)
- Week 4 (Sept. 20—26): [Prepared youth make for a more prepared community](#)



**Disasters Don't Wait.  
Make Your Plan Today**

National Preparedness Month 2020

## Quarterly

## Meetings

## Schedule

**2020**

\*

**October 1, 2020**

**Online via Zoom**

\*

**2021**

**January 25—26**

**Olympia**

\*

**April 15—16**

**Seattle**

\*

**July 15—16**

**Ellensburg**

\*

**October**

**TBD**

## Centers for Independent Living

### Alliance of People

#### with disAbilities

Seattle, WA

206.545.7055

\*

### Center for Independence

Lakewood, WA

253.582.1253

\*

### Central WA Disability Resources

Ellensburg, WA

509.962.9620

\*

### Disability Action Center —NW

Moscow, ID

208.883.0523

\*

### Spokane Center for IL

Spokane, WA

509.326.6355

***WASILC stands in solidarity with the Black Community and all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. We fully support the Black Lives Matter movement and condemn systemic racism, oppression, and injustice. Achieving our mission requires us to educate and advocate for systemic changes for all people with disabilities, which includes the intersectionality of race and disability. We recommit to this vital work and will hold ourselves accountable to become better allies. We know we cannot elevate the disability community without elevating the BIPOC communities we serve.***

## TELL ME MORE ABOUT INDEPENDENT LIVING!

We promote the Independent Living (IL) Philosophy by empowering communities through advocacy, education, and collaboration. This philosophy emphasizes the idea people with disabilities are the best experts on their own needs, deserving of equal opportunity to decide how they live, work, and take part in their communities. [Learn more.](#)

## HOW YOU CAN ENGAGE

There are two ways you can participate with WASILC. You can join a committee or apply to serve on the Council. We are currently recruiting for one open council position. If you are committed and passionate about the values and mission of WASILC, you can apply [here](#). For more information, you can either visit our [website](#) or contact Kim Conner, Executive Director, at: [kim.conner@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:kim.conner@dshs.wa.gov).

## ABOUT US

The Washington State Independent Living Council (WASILC) is an eleven-person, Governor appointed council that ensures Washington State delivers Independent Living (IL) services that are community-based and consumer-controlled for all disabilities. The primary purpose of WASILC is to monitor, review, evaluate, and maintain a State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). For questions about WASILC and its mission please contact Kim Conner, Executive Director, at 360.725.3695 or email: [kim.conner@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:kim.conner@dshs.wa.gov)

The Coalition on Inclusive Emergency Planning (CIEP), a program of WASILC, is a statewide disability advisory group that provides technical advice on physical and programmatic accesses and effective communication strategies. Questions about CIEP and its mission can be directed to Jim House, Disability Integration Manager at 360.339.7435 or email: [jim.house@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:jim.house@dshs.wa.gov).  
For general information on upcoming meetings, events, and resources, visit us at: [wasilc.org](http://wasilc.org).