

# Idaho Partners in Policymaking Final Report



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Idaho Council on  
Developmental  
Disabilities

7/15/2016

## **Introduction**

The 2015/2015 Idaho Partners in Policymaking class started out in a very unique way. Christine Jarski was hired as the Partners Coordinator in March 2015. Most of Christine's work as the Partners coordinator focused on recruitment and setting up the hotel for the Partners sessions and lodging. She took a position in Oregon and ended her work with the Council at the end of June 2015. Bonnie Markham (a 2005 Partners graduate) was hired in July 2015 and resumed recruitment and planning activities for the Partners program.

In 2008, the Council hosted focused conversations with Partner graduates where they shared the recommendation of hosting classes regionally as a way to improve connectedness among graduates. To honor their recommendation, the 2010 Partners in Policymaking program was held in northern Idaho. In order to extend the same opportunity to the southern half of our state the 2016 Partners program had a southeastern Idaho focus.

Recruitment of participants began in March 2015 and included a variety of outreach efforts. Contacts were made through school personnel and through e-mails and phone calls of ICDD contacts. Once a phone conversation took place about level of interest in the program a face-to-face visit was conducted with all potential candidates. Presentations about the Partners program were made to interested groups. Recruitment strategies resulted in 36 completed applications with the highest number of self-advocate applications in any previous Idaho Partners in Policymaking class.

## **Outreach and Recruitment**

Recruitment efforts focused on five Health and Welfare Regions:

Region 3 includes Canyon, Payette, Owyhee, and Gem counties

Region 4 includes: Ada, Boise, Valley, Washington, and Elmore counties

Region 5 includes: Twin Falls, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Minidoka, Blaine, and Camas counties

Region 6 includes: Bannock, Bingham, Bonneville, Bear Lake, Franklin, Power and Oneida counties

Region 7 includes: Custer, Lemhi, Butte, Clark, Jefferson, Madison, Fremont, and Teton counties

Provided is an accounting of in-person conversations and presentations conducted. Additional outreach was delivered through ICDD's Facebook page, Constant Contact, ICDD webpage and newsletters. The most effective means of recruitment is in-person conversations that focus on the learning and life changing experiences that attending Partners brings to an individual's life.

<b>March 2015</b>				
March 4	Self Advocate	In Person	Boise	1
March 9	Service Coordinator	In Person	Boise	1
March 13	School Principal/Parent	In Person	Nampa	1
March 19	Parent	In Person	Boise	1
<b>April 2015</b>				
April 9	Former PIP Graduate	In Person	Boise	1
April 14	SpEd Director, Vallivue School District	In Person	Caldwell	1
April 28	Boise Transition Program—STEP	Presentation	Boise	12
<b>May 2015</b>				
May 8	Jump Start Therapy Clinic	In Person	Meridian	1
May 16	Challenger Baseball, Meridian—Parents & Self-Advocates	In Person	Meridian	8
May 18	Physical Therapist	In Person	Nampa	1
May 19	Gem State Development Center, Meridian -- Self Advocates	Presentation	Meridian	23
May 22	Special Olympics	In Person	Boise	1
May 27	West Ada County Transitions Program -- Self Advocates	Presentation	Meridian	16
<b>June 2015</b>				
June 3	Parent	In Person	Burley	1
June 2	State Dept. of Ed	In Person	Boise	1
June 4	Development Workshop of Idaho--Self Advocates	Presentation	Idaho Falls	9
June 4	Development Workshop of Idaho--Self Advocates	Presentation	Idaho Falls	1
June 4	Parent	In Person	Dubois	1
June 4	LIFE Inc.--Partner Organization	In Person	Idaho Falls	2
June 4	Parent	In Person	Idaho Falls	1

June 15	Parent	In Person	Mountain Home	1
June 16	LIFE Inc.-- Self Advocates	In Person	Pocatello	2
June 16	Parent	In Person	Idaho Falls	1
June 16	Self Advocate	In Person	Idaho Falls	1
<b>Total In Person Contacts</b>				<b>89</b>

Candidates who applied were a unique variety as compared to previous applicants. An application was received from a parent whose primary language is Spanish, a self-advocate who is the child of a former Partners graduate, the first applicant to the program with a diagnosis of Spina Bifida, and a high volume of self-advocate applications. Angela Lindig, Executive Director at Idaho Parents Unlimited, and James Steed, Council member and 2005 Partners graduate, assisted on the selection committee for the 2016 Partners program. Ultimately, 12 parents and 14 self-advocates accepted the challenge to begin the 2016 Partners Program. One parent chose to leave after the 4<sup>th</sup> session. In May of 2016, 25 individuals graduated from the 9<sup>th</sup> class of Idaho Partners in Policymaking.

### **People and Organizations that Made a Real Difference in Outreach and Recruitment Efforts:**

Angela Lindig, Idaho Parents Unlimited

Karen Gillette and Jennifer Comstock, STEP, Boise School District Transition Program

Teri Hutton & Angela Tabb, Vallivue School District

Tammy Cluff, Challenger Baseball Athletic Director

Jump Start, Dianne Davidson, Meridian

CarlynAnn McClaren, Advocates for Inclusion, Caldwell

TeRonda Robinson, Community Partnerships of Idaho

Lori Gentillon, Developmental Workshops of Idaho

Shelly Nelson, Person Centered Planning Specialist

## Review of Partners in Policymaking Sessions

### Session 1: HISTORY

September 18-19, 2015 Holiday Inn, Airport

**Curriculum:** History of Disability  
Independent Living Movement  
Parent Movement  
Self-Advocacy Movement  
People First Language



Toni Brinegar, ICDD and Kathie Snow,  
Presenter

### Competencies:

- Participants will have an increased knowledge of historical perspectives of services for people with disabilities.
- Participants will be able to describe history and role of parent movement.
- Participants will be able to describe history and role of the independent living movement.
- Participants will be able to describe history and role of self-advocacy movement.
- Participants will be able to describe the importance of using respectful language or People First Language.

**Presenters:** Kathie Snow-1991 Partners Graduate  
Dean Nielson-Executive Director LIFE Inc.  
Richelle Tierney-SALN State Coordinator,  
Laurie Lowe-SALN Member, Boise Chapter  
Ian Bott-SALN Member, Boise Chapter

### Session in Review:

Kathie Snow was the highlight of this session bringing forth history of disability and the parent movement and showing parents and self-advocates the importance of having a life instead of adopting the “medical model” as the only way for themselves and their children to have a “real life.” Dean Nielson stressed the importance of learning from history and also brought forth information on why and how Centers for Independent Living were created in every state. Members of the Self Advocate Leadership Network shared their experiences as

members of Idaho's only organization lead by individuals with disabilities and encouraged others to join or create chapters in their areas.

**Presenter satisfaction: High**

The presenters were ranked high on material and presentation. Partners commented that they would like more hands-on activities during this presentation and that they would like more activities to get to know each other during this first session. Dean Nielson's activities were enjoyed by the group. Comments focused on the importance of hearing other Partners' personal stories. The majority of the Partners expressed excitement about going back to their communities and striving for positive change.

**Recommendations to Improve Session:**

The data was being presented at a rapid pace, the handouts were either not available or needed more visuals so partners with visual impairments could have better accommodations. If there could be some data presented then an activity or a change in presentation style it would keep partners more engaged.



Kevin Swearingen, Shelley, ID; Korynne Donehey, Idaho Falls, ID

## **Session 2: PBIS/EDUCATION**

October 9-10, 2015 Holiday Inn, Airport

**Curriculum:** Positive Behavior Intervention Supports  
Quality Inclusive Education  
Vocational Rehab  
School Work Program  
Secondary Transition



Paul Hemker, Boise, ID; Sara Teuller, Meridian, ID

### **Competencies:**

- Participants will be able to describe the reasons for an inclusive, quality education.
- Participants will be able to outline specific strategies to achieve an inclusive quality education.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate how to be effective in team meetings.

### **Presenters:** Julie Fodor-University of Idaho

Dr. Jeff Hall-Northwest Neurobehavioral Health

Jason Lowry-Inclusion, Inc.

Angela Lindig-Executive Director, Idaho Parents Unlimited (IPUL)

Jennifer Zielinski-IPUL, Parent Coordinator

Amelia Valasek-Adult Basic Education

Christine Pisani and Toni Belknap-Brinegar-ICDD

### **Session in Review:**

Session Two began with presentations by Dr. Julie Fodor and Dr. Jeff Hall on behavior as communication and how positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) can lead to more positive outcomes in people's lives. Jason Lowry continued with this discussion with his presentation on PBIS and how fun it can actually be when given the right environments in creating behavior change. Angela Lindig and Jennifer Zielinski (Idaho Parents Unlimited) presented to the group about inclusion in education and encouraged parents to involve their children as much as possible in the individual education plan. Amelia Valasek helped self-advocates and parents understand that there are options after high school or in lieu of high school (in the form of adult basic education). The weekend was completed by ICDD staff working with self-advocates on learning

skills to run their own service planning meetings and parents learning how to create strength-based Individual Education Plans (IEP's).

**Presenter satisfaction: Good to High**

One person commented: "love, love, love" for Jason Lowry's presentation.



Catabrie Jarrett, Caldwell, ID; James Foster, Idaho Falls, ID; Jason Lowry, Presenter

**Recommendations to Improve Session:**

There was a lot of information given during this session and most Partners said they would have liked more time with the topics and fewer presenters during this session.

**Session 3: INDEPENDENT LIVING/EMPLOYMENT**

November 13-14, 2015 Holiday Inn Airport

**Curriculum:** Supports for Living  
Independently in the Community  
Supported/Competitive  
& Self Employment



Tracy Warren, ICDD

**Competencies:**

- Participants will understand the types of supports necessary for creating a positive home environment.
- Understanding the need for all individuals to experience changes in lifestyle across the life span.
- Participants will be able to describe the importance of supported/competitive employment opportunities.
- Partners will have an understanding of how segregated employment models continue to perpetuate the notion that individuals with developmental disabilities are unable to contribute as valued members of their communities.

**Presenters:** James Turner-Living Independently Incorporated (LINC, Boise)

Tracy Warren-ICDD

Ron Enright-ICCD Retired (Group team building activity)

Ellen Condon-University of Montana Rural Institute

**Session in Review:** Historically, Session 3 of Idaho Partners featured a visit to Idaho's only institution for individuals with developmental disabilities—Idaho State School and Hospital (ISSH), now known as Southwest Idaho Treatment Center (SWIT-C). At this time, the Department of Health and Welfare has determined that this large and largely unused facility is no longer necessary and is moving towards a more community-based model for treatment and stabilization. Scheduling a visit to SWIT-C at this time does not accurately reflect the history of what has occurred to individuals with disabilities within institutions across the United States. Instead of visiting of Southwest Idaho Treatment Center as had been done every year previous, the documentary "Willowbrook: The Last Great

Disgrace” was shown. This film reveals the atrocities that befell individuals with developmental disabilities in 1972 in an institution housed on Staten Island as reported by Geraldo Rivera. Although it is a very disturbing 30-minute video, it shows how far the United States has come in treating and respecting individuals with developmental disabilities. Revealing this history is a necessary part of the learning that Partners participants need to understand in order to move towards the idea of full citizenship and away from the exclusionary efforts that are becoming more and more common in Idaho. Additionally, this session focused on learning about the Centers for Independent Living across Idaho and how their services help everyone live as independently as they are able. Part of living independently is learning what skills and abilities each Partners has that can help them become gainfully employed. Tracy Warren and Ellen Condon focused on employment and how to discover the gifts and talents of all people that can lead to gainful employment.

**Presenter satisfaction: Good to High**

**Recommendations to Improve Session:**

Several partners commented that the video about Willowbrook Institution was disturbing to them and they didn't understand the why it needed to be shown. Ellen Condon was a great speaker but had a lot of information. Overall flavor of the comments was with the density of material Partners need to have a switch in activity, presentation style or more breaks given.

**Session 4 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION/COMMUNITY BUILDING**

January 8-9, 2016 Holiday Inn, Airport

**Curriculum:** Effective Communication  
Creating your Story  
Community Organizing

**Competencies:**

- Participants will be able to use effective communication skills to advocate for themselves or their child.
- Participants will be able to write or tell their own story in a way to positively impact the disability community.
- Participants will understand the concepts of asset based community development.
- Participants will be able to identify their own gifts and talents.
- Will identify the benefits for identifying strengths in individuals and in communities as a way to highlight the gifts and talents of all community members and to develop community capacity.



**Presenters:** Toni Belknap-Brinegar ICDD  
Gary Sandusky-Community Organizer

**Session Review:**

This session began with a presentation by ICDD staff member, Toni Brinegar, focusing on teaching tactics and tools when having difficult conversations. The message focused on respecting yourself and the individual you are conversing with and being authoritative but not aggressive in your communication. Gary Sandusky provided the bulk of the learning for this weekend with a focus on learning to tell a personal story and how a personal story can move others to action.

**Presenter satisfaction: Good to High**

**Recommendations to Improve Session:**

The Partners would have liked this session as one of the first sessions. The consensus was it really helped them to get to know the other Partners better and by writing their stories down it helped to solidify some of their beliefs. Some would have liked more time to spend developing and writing their stories.

**Session 5: LEGISLATIVE**

February 9-10, 2016

Holiday Inn & Idaho Statehouse

**Curriculum:** State Legislative Process  
Parliamentary Procedure  
Develop/Delivering Testimony  
Topic: ABLE Act



Dennis Miller & Rep. Thompson, District 30

**Competencies:**

- Participants will be able to describe how a bill becomes a law at the state level.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate successful techniques for advocating for services to meet the needs of unserved and underserved individuals.
- Participants will be able to prepare and deliver testimony for legislative hearings.
- Participants will gain a basic understanding of parliamentary procedure and serving on boards.
- Participants will be able to demonstrate proper procedures for conducting a meeting.
- Participants will demonstrate how to meet with a public official and discuss issues.

**Presenters:** Christine Pisani, ICDD

Richelle Tierney SALN State Coordinator

Ian Bott, SALN Boise Chapter

Noll Garcia, SALN Boise Chapter

Mock Hearing Participants:

Christine Pisani, Executive Director, ICDD

Tracy Warren, ICDD

Jim Baugh, Executive Director, DisAbility Rights Idaho

Toni Brinegar, ICDD

**Session Review:**

The legislative session is a session that brings great anxiety for Partners participants. Between this session and the one prior, they are required to set up face-to-face meetings with the elected officials and then meet with them during the February session. Time was spent this session teaching how a bill becomes a law, etiquette within the Statehouse, and preparing testimony. SALN was tasked with teaching the Partners about building relationships with legislators and how to conduct one-on-one meetings with legislators. During the mock hearing, every Partner spoke about their personal story and how it relates to one of two topics: cuts in Supported Living rates or the ABLE Act (Achieving a Better Life Experience Act). The mock legislators had an opportunity to ask questions of the Partners and they had to elaborate or give more information about how their story related to their lives or the lives of their loved ones. The highlight of this session is the one-on-one meetings with legislators. Most Partners were able to meet with at least one of their legislators and many met with all three or more. Over 40 legislators were educated about the ABLE Act and how it could result in a positive live outcome for the Partners or their families. Feedback from Legislators was that they appreciated knowing in advance about the ABLE Act and shock at how little individuals receiving federal benefits were able to save without it adversely affecting them financially.

**Presenter satisfaction:** SALN Speakers and tour: Neutral  
Christine Pisani, ABLE Act: High

**Recommendations to Improve Session:**

SALN was not well prepared for their presentation or the tour of the Capital. Partners felt the tour was not informative and they were “walking around in a pack.” Partners would also like more information about the legislative session in the previous session. Even though they were assured not to worry that we would help them through the legislative session they expressed having anxiety because they didn’t have a clear picture of what would happen. They would like to be walked through it the month before to bring anxiety levels down.

## Session 6: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING

March 11-12, 2016 Holiday Inn, Airport

**Curriculum:** Assistive Technology  
Person Centered Planning



Kaleb McCloughan, Boise

### Competencies:

- Participants will be able to describe the state of the art technologies for people with significant disabilities and apply technology devices to their own situation.
- Participants will be able to describe the person centered planning process and understand the value in creating a plan for themselves or their child.

**Presenters:** Assistive Technology Project, Center on Disability and Human Development

Tracy Warren, ICDD

PCP Experts and Artists:

Tracy Warren, Artist

Judy Secrist, PCP Specialist

Heather Stanton, Artist

Shelly Nelson, PCP Specialist

Tara Landis, Artist

Trina Balanoff, PCP Specialist

Kimberly (Nikki) King-Gunning, Artist

Bonnie Markham, PCP Specialist

### Session in Review:

This session featured a very interactive session with the Assistive Technology Project leader, Dr. Janice Carson, and the three staff members who work on this project within the Center on Disability and Human Development. The purpose of this presentation was to show Partners that assistive technology levels the playing field for those that have alternative learning, communication or physical needs. The bulk of the session's learning took place during the introduction and then

participation of the group on developing person-centered plans. In addition to the Partners, five Family and Community Services (FACS) staff members joined in the learning and PCP plan development. Four previously trained Person-Centered Planning specialists came to help four self-advocates develop a person-centered plan utilizing the PATH (Planning Alternatives Tomorrows with Hope) tool for person-centered planning. The rest of the Partners participants, ICDD staff members and FACS staff members acted as the support people for the planning meeting. The purpose was to simulate what a true person-centered plan looks and feels like. All four participants reported feeling empowered to reach their goal after the completion of their plans.

**Presenter Satisfaction: High**

**Recommendations to Improve Session:**

Each Partner would like to have a chance to do a PATH themselves. Parent Partners would have liked to do a PATH on their child. Some Partners were not able to see the PATH's presented on other participants and transfer how that information could be helpful to themselves.

**Session 7: SELF DETERMINATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT**

April 8-9, 2016 Holiday Inn, Airport

**Curriculum:** Self Determination  
Family Support  
Alternatives to Guardianship

**Competencies:**

- Participants will learn an overview of the services available in Idaho.
- Participants will understand that each person self-determines in their own way.
- Participants will be able to describe how services work from the federal to state level.
- Participants will be able to describe the value of family support.
- Participants will be able to understand alternatives to guardianship and the viewpoint of guardianship from the self-advocacy movement.

**Presenters:** John Agosta-Human Services Research Institute  
Jenifer Cananess-Williams, 1 World Dance

**Session in Review:**

This weekend was presented by John Agosta from HSRI with the purpose of reviewing what services are available in Idaho and elsewhere in the United States and building a picture of what the future could look like for each of the Partners participants and their families. Partners learned why “Waivers” were introduced at the federal level and how they have become a viable and more independent option for people with disabilities. They also learned why it’s important to include individuals with disabilities at every level of decision-making about services and supports. Some quotes that summarize this session are as follows:

*“Before self-determination there is self-esteem. A person has to love themselves. A person has to be proud of who they are.” Rebecca Cokley, Self-Advocate*

*“Good parenting is the art of graciously giving ground.” John Agosta, Idaho PIP, 2016*

*“Self-determination is for everyone--if you’re paying attention and meeting the person where they are.” John Agosta, Idaho PIP 2016*

**Presenter satisfaction: High**

**Recommendations to Improve Session:**

Partners would have liked more information on Guardianships and the different types of guardianships explained more fully. In addition the Partners from eastern Idaho were overtired because of the early morning travel. There was a suggestion that Partners traveling from afar should come in the night before rather than the day of the meeting to facilitate better learning.



Clyde Hansen,  
Boise, ID

## **Session 8: STATE AGENCIES/NON-PROFITS & GRADUATION**

May 13-14, 2016 Holiday Inn, Boise Senior Center

### **Curriculum:** State Agencies/Non Profit

- Serving on Boards
- Visioning Activity
- Graduation

### **Competencies:**

- Participants will create a shared vision with fellow participants for the year 2020 (and beyond) for people with disabilities.
- Participants will gain a basic understanding of serving on boards.
- Partners will understand the impact of the Partners Project on their lives and the lives of others.

### **Presenters at Roundtable:**

**Elaine Ellison**, Division of Medicaid  
**Cameron Gilliland**, Family and Community Services  
**Dr. Charlie Silva**, State Dept. of Education  
**Mel Leviton**, State Independent Living Council  
**Jim Baugh**, DisAbility Rights Idaho  
**Jane Donnellan**, Vocational Rehabilitation  
**Gordon Graff**, Department of Labor  
**Richelle Tierney**, Center on Disability and Human Development, University of Idaho  
**Christine Pisani**, Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

### **Presenter at Visioning Activity:**

Bonnie J Markham PIP Coordinator

### **Presenters at Graduation:**

Christine Pisani, ICDD Executive Director  
 Debra Parsons, ICDD Council Chair  
 James Steed, Keynote  
 PIP Graduate Speeches



Kevin Swearingen, Shelley, ID and James Foster, Idaho Falls, ID with Cameron Gilliland, FACS (Kindra

**Session in Review:** Partners participants were broken into groups and assigned a state or non-profit agency to research in-between sessions. They were asked to interview the contact for each agency and then draft additional questions they would like to have answered during the roundtable discussion. On the first day of the session, each group presented to the entire group what they learned about their agency. Then, the guests from each agency were invited into the room and a roundtable question-and-answer session occurred where each group asked additional questions of the agency leader. Great discussions were developing and time ran out for more in-depth conversations. Both the Partners and the agency leaders seemed to enjoy this activity. A dessert social ended this part of the session with desserts made by Partners participant, Clyde Hansen. An art activity and “visioning” activity occurred at the end of the day where each Partner was able to take a piece of each participant home with them through art. The highlight of the weekend was graduation held at the Boise Senior Center. Partners, their families, ICDD staff, and guests celebrated the learning that occurred throughout the past 8-months with a speech by each Partner as well as keynote speeches from former Partners graduates, Debra Parsons and James Steed.

**Presenter satisfaction: High**



Carly Saxe, Eagle, ID with Debra Parsons, ICDD Council Chair

**Recommendations to Improve Session:** The Partners really enjoyed the round table discussion and found the networking time beneficial. They would have like more time to ask question of their own rather than have question already prepared beforehand that the agency leaders answered. They also would have liked all the activities to end on Friday night and graduation in the morning probably due to the drive time that the Partners from Eastern Idaho had after graduation.

## Partners Final Project Topics

**Angel Aguilera:** Do radio spots on Spanish radio station to let Hispanic community know about resources available for people with disabilities, he is partnering with Nancy.

**Camille Ashcraft:** Developing a time set aside for self-care, partnering with Lana, they were encouraged to journal about it so the information could be used to benefit other Parent advocates.

**Shiloh Blackburn:** Create 4 Power Point presentation curriculum on 1) mentoring 2) leadership skills 3) using your voice in a respectful manner 4) Teamwork

**Korynne Donehey:** Blog on what is like to live with a hidden disability specifically a traumatic brain injury, she has already started it!

**Shane Facer:** Meet with at least two police officers to educate them on people with traumatic brain injury and how they may act like they are under the influence of a substance but it may be results of their injury. He had some bad experiences with law enforcement who thought he was drinking when they gave him sobriety tests and it was his injury that made him not able to pass the tests, so he was arrested.

**James Foster:** Starting a group with his peers and coordinating it to attend events in the community. He is getting support through his developmental specialist and the developmental workshop that he attends.

**Rachel Gardner:** She is going to work on inclusion for her daughter going into the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. She is also attending a Conference in the Chicago on speech apraxia and would like to bring information back to her community to educate them about it. There is not a lot of information in this area on it and she would like to help teach the therapists better techniques to get better services for her daughter and other children with the condition. One of the classes she is taking is how to address apraxia in the speech setting and how to educate the teachers on it. Which would support inclusion.

**Holly Giglio:** Getting a 501C nonprofit status for the parent group that she leads.

**Lana Gonzalez:** Developing a time set aside for self-care, partnering with Lana, they were encouraged to journal about it so the information could be used to benefit other Parent advocates.

**Jack Hansen:** Jack attempted to invite Senator Martin to his house for dinner but Senator Martin declined, they compromised on Senator Martin going to Jack's work and seeing what he does there. In addition Christine would like to help Jack be prepared to talk about the ABLE Act in the 2017 legislative session.

**Clyde Hansen:** He wants to advocate for others, in addition he is going to prepare to speak in the 2017 legislature about the ABLE Act with support from the ICDD staff.

**Jacob Head:** He is starting a blog about what he learned in Partners and his work on the Council.

**Catibrie Jarrett:** To find a job working with animals in her community, she may also go and do a presentation to her teacher where she graduated from, she was encouraged her to do so and let other people know about the program and how it has helped her.

**Dennis Miller:** Photo sessions for families that have children with disabilities.

**Nancy Ovalle:** Do radio spots on Spanish radio station to let Hispanic community know about resources available for people with disabilities, he is partnering with Nancy.

**Libby Parsons:** She is going to do research on babies born addicted to substances; then educate young women why it is important to avoid drugs during pregnancy and the disabilities that using drugs during pregnancy can cause.

**Dan Salmi:** He is going to work with the elementary school that his daughter attends to educate the students on what disabilities are in the hope of preventing children with disabilities being ostracized in school.

**Carly Saxe:** She is going to make a map of all of the water areas in her neighborhood to help educate new neighbors coming into the neighborhood

about the location of water to keep the children safe; there are no fences around the water.

**Kevin Swearingen:** Help SALN in his area get started again.

**Sarah Tueller:** She is the coach for the Capital High School cheerleading team and is working to make it inclusive for all teens.

**TBD:** Kaleb McGloughlin, Paul Hempker, Karla LaCourse, Erin Rosenkoetter, Kristie Yerger

### **Partner Graduates who provided support for the 2016 Program:**

- Jan Harvey, Facilitator—Session 4
- Dolores Totorica, Facilitator—Session 4
- Paul Tierney, Facilitator—Session 4
- Suzie Hanks, Facilitator—Session 4, Pictures, Graduation help
- Trina Balanof, PCP Planning Specialist, Session 6
- Debra Parsons, Graduation Keynote Speaker
- James Steed, Graduation Keynote Speaker
- Noll Garcia, SALN—Session 5
- Tracy Warren, Employment & PCP; Mock Hearing
- Bonnie Markham, Partners Coordinator
- Toni Brinegar, PIP Supervisor; Communication 101



Trina Balanof, Former PIP Grad

### **Overall Comments about Idaho Partners in Policymaking Program**

- *“I learned to feel proud of my children.”* Parent Advocate
- *“Being in this class with parents has helped me, given me a new perspective on disabilities and a new appreciation for what my parents went through.”* Self-Advocate
- *“I have learned how to defend people with disabilities knowing their rights.”* Parent Advocate
- *“I am going to try to be more patient with my own parents.”* Self-Advocate
- *“I learned to listen to my child and what she wants.”* Parent Advocate

- *“[Partners] helped me with my self-esteem. Helped me to believe in myself and my story, helped me to believe that I can change the world.”* Self-Advocate
- *“What I have thought about as important for my typical children: good grades, extracurricular activities, college education, is not necessarily the same goals I should have for my son with special needs. Though I still have very high expectations for him I have learned that there are more important things than grades. His happiness is, of course, most important. But, I have learned that I need to let him guide his own happiness. Good grades and a college education, though he may want and accomplish this, do not necessarily equate to ‘happy.’”* Parent Advocate
- *“[Partners] got me learning more about myself...and it helped me to feel like I can stand up for other people better, as well as myself.”* Self-Advocate
- *“I learned that I do have importance and the talents I have can be utilized to help others.”* Parent Advocate
- *“[I learned how to] talk to Senators and make my beliefs and opinions known.”* Self-Advocate
- *“I was always intimidated by heads of agencies and government officials, but they are kind and approachable. Roundtable discussion and the day at the Capitol were the most valuable experience[s].”* Parent Advocate
- *“I am a better speaker and advocate for disabilities than I thought. I know more than I realized and can assist/help others have better times (disabled or not).”* Self-Advocate

### **Recommendations for Improvement for future Partners Sessions:**

- Different roommates (in order to get to know more people better)
- More review of homework during the session with emphasis of how homework applies to the session
- More preparation of what to expect at the Legislative session
- More activities throughout each day of the sessions (more interactive learning)
- Use of bi-lingual presenters, if possible, instead of interpretation only
- More introductions to speakers so participants can get to know them better

### **2016 Partners in Policymaking Budget**