



Volume 5
March 15,
2024

DD News and Updates

Newsletter

Developmental Disabilities Month 2024



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DD Community Forum

Join BHDDH for the Spring DD Community Forum on March 19 at 3 pm to get the latest news. To attend you must register in advance. Sign-up by completing the [online registration form](#).



We want to learn from you!

We want to continue to learn from the community. Share your feedback about our newsletter by completing our [online newsletter survey](#). We will keep the survey open to make sure we keep getting your feedback.

DDD Updates

DD Community Forum Tuesday, March 19, 2024



The first DD Community Forum of the year is next Tuesday, March 19. This event will take place online from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm. The event is free and open to anyone interested in joining.

Event Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 **Event Location:** Online using Zoom

Event Time: 3:00-4:30 pm

Event Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/DDForumMar2024>

At this event, you will learn BHDDH news and updates from Director Kevin Savage and other members of the team. This is also a great event for BHDDH to learn more from you. Please join and share your thoughts, questions, and concerns.

To attend the forum, you must sign-up anytime before Tuesday, March 19. Please [sign-up online by filling out the DD Community Forum registration form \(link to form\)](#). If you need help with this, call Advocates in Action toll-free: 1-877-532-5543, or email aina@AdvocatesinAction.org. After you complete your form, you will get an email with information about joining the forum.

Advocates in Action is hosting the forum on Zoom. You can join online or call into the meeting. The forum will be recorded.

An American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter will be at this event.

BHDDH Your Life, Your Rights Program



This March we are celebrating Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. What better way to celebrate than by learning more about your rights?!

In our March 4th newsletter, we shared a flyer about your safety rights. You will find this one-page flyer again on the next page of this newsletter.

We know that with knowledge comes power. To give you even more tools to better understand your safety rights we created a guidebook. This guidebook will explain your rights to safety and freedom in life in more detail. You can find this guidebook on our [Your Life, Your Rights Program website](#).

Remember, you deserve to live a safe, free, and happy life.



Your Life, Your Rights

Safety and Freedom in Life

Personal Space and Boundaries



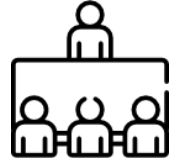
You can take breaks when needed to relax



You decide when you need help and from who



You have safe places you can go



You have people you trust to talk to

Safety in the Community



You can ask for space when you need it



Your personal boundaries will be respected



You will have information about travelling safely



You will have information about safe places to go to for help

Health and Medical Safety



You can make decisions about your health



You can make an appointment with your doctor when you need to



You can talk to your doctor about starting or stopping treatment



You can go to the emergency room for serious injuries

Freedom from Abuse



You will not be harmed physically



You will not be harmed sexually



You will not be harmed verbally



You will not be taken advantage of



You will be treated with dignity and respect



You will get the correct treatment you need



You will get help living a safe and healthy life

To report abuse and serious events call the BHDDH Quality Assurance (QA) Unit hotline at (401) 462-2629. The hotline is open 24-hours a day, seven days per week, 365 days per year.

Website: www.bhddh.ri.gov

Email: BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov

Phone: 401.462.3421

ESPAÑOL: 401.462.3014

DDD Updates

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

March is DD Awareness Month. People with I/DD have diverse backgrounds. They have many strengths and gifts that improve the Rhode Island community. The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) sees the value in these differences. DDD serves adults with I/DD so they can focus on the things that matter most to them. DDD commits to:

- Plan, fund, and oversee adult I/DD services and supports.
- Ensure people have the supports they need to live their lives.
- Ensure people can find and keep a job if they want.
- Ensure people have the chance to be involved in their community.
- Provide information to adults with I/DD to help them make decisions about what services and supports they want and need.

To learn more about DDD and DD Awareness Month go to:

- [Rhode Island Division of Developmental Disabilities \(website\)](#)
- [Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council \(website\)](#)

March is Social Work Month



People become social workers because they truly want to help others. They go through years of education and training so they can do the important work of meeting people where they are and helping them achieve their goals. Our DD social case workers work hard every day to

improve people's quality of life and to advocate on their behalf. We want to take time this month to recognize the DD social caseworkers and the great things they do.

There are many changes happening at the Division. The DD social caseworkers have a key role in helping to make the changes as smooth as possible. They keep the needs of the people we serve at the forefront and help make a positive impact on everyone.

Please take a moment to help celebrate and thank our DD social caseworkers for all they do!

Community News

The President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities (PCPID)

The President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities (PCPID) is hosting a virtual public meeting. The meeting will focus on home and community-based services (HCBS). For those who have registered by Thursday, March 7th, 2024-the Committee invites the community to join the event to share feedback.

Date and Time: Thursday, March 21, 2024, from 12:00-5:00 PM

Location: Online

To Register: [PCPID Committee meeting registration webpage](#)

Healthcare Workforce Transformation

Preparing the Workforce for a Healthy Rhode Island

Online Health workforce planning update scheduled for Wednesday, March 27, 2024. Where private and public professionals discuss the statewide health workforce planning efforts. Including a presentation about the workforce initiative in R.I.'s Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities provider community. You must register for the event to attend.

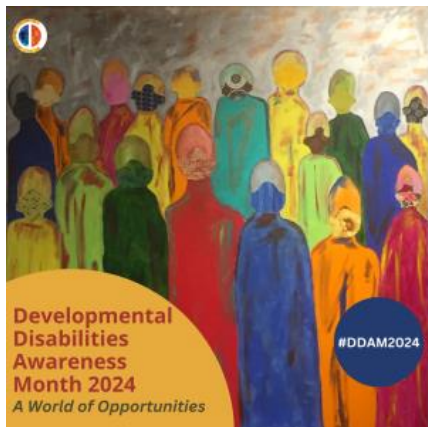
Event Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Event Location: Online using Zoom

Event Time: 12:00 – 1:00 pm

Event Registration: [Registration form \(website\)](#)

Developmental Disability Awareness Month (DDAM) 2024



Join the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) as they celebrate DDAM 2024! The theme is a “World of Opportunities.” NACDD has two events celebrating DDAM. Explore the [NACDD DDAM 2024 webpage to learn more and to sign-up](#).

Event 1: Self Advocate Discussion Series on Thursday, March 21, 4:00 pm

Event 2: A Conversation with Lee Waters on Monday, March 29, 3:00 pm

Community News

ATAP Assistive Technology Awareness Day Event

This spring, the Warwick Public Library is hosting an assistive technology awareness day event. The event will share information about different assistive technologies. Demonstrations, or tutorials, of different assistive technologies will take place at the event.

Event: ATAP Assistive Technology Awareness Day Celebration 2024

Date and Time: Wednesday, April 3, 2024, from 2:30-4:30 PM

Location: Warwick Public Library

To Register: [ATAP Assistive Technology Awareness Day Celebration 2024 Eventbrite webpage](#)



Free Person-Centered Thinking Facilitator Training Spring 2024

Event Date: Monday, April 1 - Tuesday, June 4, 2024

Event Time: Various times

Event Location: Remote learning and group sessions using Zoom

Event Registration: [Person-Centered Thinking Facilitator Training registration webpage](#)



This course teaches the knowledge and skills the facilitator needs to get ready for the person-centered planning process, including creating the plan and putting the plan into action with a participant.

This course takes place over three months and requires approximately 40 hours of online learning including readings, quizzes and assignments. Learners will participate in four instructor-led group sessions using Zoom.

The required group sessions take place from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on:

Tuesday, April 9
Tuesday, April 23

Tuesday, May 14
Tuesday, June 4

Community News

Grant awards up to \$5,000

Calling all local business and organizations! The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities is looking for applications for local business and organizations for their **2024 Access for All Abilities Mini Grants**. The Sherlock Center in celebration of their 30th anniversary will award **four** grants of up to \$5,000.

What do you have to do to apply? Fill out an application by going to the Sherlock Center website.

Website: [Access for All Abilities Mini Grants](#)

When do you have to apply by? Please apply by Wednesday, April 10, 2024

When will you hear by? Grant recipients will be notified by Friday, May 3, 2024

Who can apply? Applicants must provide social, leisure, recreational or cultural activities to the public. They must be located in Rhode Island or primarily serve Rhode Island communities.

To learn more, visit the [Sherlock Center website](#).



The Rhode Island Direct Support Professional Workforce Public Comment Period Open Now Through April 23, 2024



State of Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative

A public-private partnership supporting those who support adults with intellectual & developmental disabilities

[The Rhode Island State Workforce Initiative \(RISWI; website\)](#) is an initiative to advance and sustain the Direct Support Professional (DSP) workforce.

RISW has been working to create a DSP training and onboarding template to use in different service settings. Before taking any further action, RISWI would like community comments and feedback on the "Draft Training and Onboarding Template." The public comment period is open now through **April 23, 2024**. The template and instructions for public comment are below:

- [Direct Support Professional Training and Onboarding Template \(PDF\)](#)
- [Instructions for Public Comment \(PDF\)](#)

You can visit the [RISWI Public Feedback Requested webpage](#) to learn more and to submit feedback.

Community News

RIPIN's 2024 Annual Breakfast



Event: 2024 Annual Breakfast

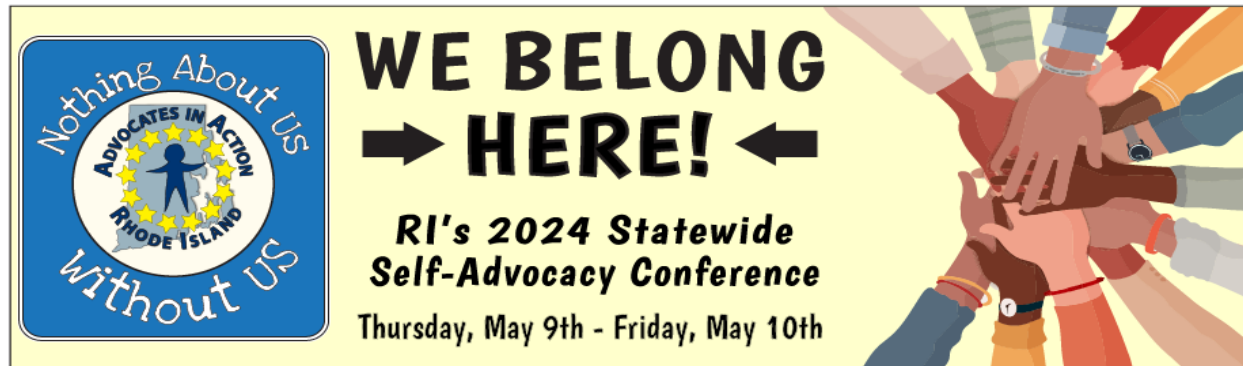
Date and Time: Thursday, May 23, 2024, from 8:00-10:00 AM

Location: Crowne Plaza, Warwick

Register and Learn More: [RIPIN website](#).

The annual breakfast is an opportunity for families, professionals, advocates, and community leaders to get together to celebrate the community at large. At this event, you can expect awards for individuals making contributions to the community. This is a wonderful opportunity to network and connect with families and professionals.

Register for the Rhode Island 2024 Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference



You can now sign-up for Rhode Island's 2024 Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference. This event is hosted by Advocates in Action, and the theme is "We Belong Here."

The **Conference Day** is **Thursday, May 9th from 10:00 AM to 2:30 PM**. It will take place online using Zoom. It is free, but you must sign-up to attend. You can sign-up online by submitting the [conference registration form \(website\)](#).

Day 2 is a **Dinner Dance Party** on **Friday, May 10th from 6:30-10:30 PM** at the Providence Marriott Downtown. You must buy a ticket for the dance party. Tickets are \$30 per person. You can [buy a conference ticket online \(website\)](#). The last day to buy a ticket is Friday, May 3rd.

Visit the [Advocates in Action website](#) for the latest updates about the event.

Community News

A World of Opportunities: Promoting Augmentative and Alternative Communication

In celebration of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM), The Administration for Community Living (ACL) is working towards breaking down challenges to creating inclusive communities so that all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) can be successful.



The ACL believes that people with I/DD are most successful when they are supported in communicating and advocating for themselves. Many use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) to interact and connect with the world. Their new project, which is being led by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), will focus on improving and maximizing peer learning to increase awareness and use of AAC.

To learn more and read the full article go to the [ACL website](#).

Volunteer Income Tax Preparation Services (VITA)

United Way
of Rhode Island



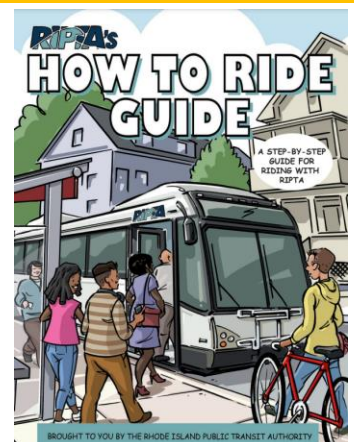
VITA offers free tax preparation services across RI for those who make less than \$63,398. They offer a list of all the convenient locations offering their free services.

Volunteer prepares are trained and certified by the Internal Revenue Services (IRS). For a complete list and to learn more, please visit [the United Way RI website](#).

Accessibility Tip

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) is the State's public transportation office. RIPTA offers transportation services to all of Rhode Island. They have supports for people with disabilities, and guides to help people learn how to safely ride the bus.

The RIPTA How to Ride Guides teach you how to read the bus schedule, get a bus pass, and more. Visit the [RIPTA How to Ride website](#) for a copy of the guides and other helpful learning tools.



Report Suspected Abuse

QA Hotline 401-462-2629

Mandated Reporting

Reporting suspected occurrences of abuse, neglect, and mistreatment of individuals with developmental disabilities

To **report abuse and serious incidents** call the BHDDH Quality Assurance (QA) Unit **hotline at (401) 462-2629**. The hotline is open 24-hour hotline, seven days per week, 365 days per year. Staff respond to reported incidents of abuse, neglect, mistreatment, and financial exploitation.

BH Link is Here for You

BH Link's mission is to ensure all Rhode Islanders experiencing mental health and substance use crises receive the appropriate services they need as quickly as possible in an environment that supports their recovery. Visit the BH Link website at www.bhlink.org.

If under 18 CALL: (855) KID (543)-LINK(5465)

VISIT the 24-HOUR/7-DAY Triage Center at:

975 Waterman Avenue, East Providence, RI

Call 911 if there is a risk of immediate danger.

If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text **988** or chat 988lifeline.org



For More Information on DD Initiatives

Newsletters: sign up and view old newsletters on our [News and Updates webpage](#)

Consent Decree: <https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/consent-decree>

Conflict Free Case Management (CFCM): [EOHHS CFCM website](#) or [DD Initiatives-CFCM](#)

RI DSP State Workforce Initiative: <https://riswi.org/> or [DD Initiatives-SWI](#)

Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Contacting DDD Staff

See the full Division Contact List attached to this newsletter.

Send general questions to BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov.

Please do not email critical issues.

Website: www.bhddh.ri.gov

Phone: 401.462.3421

Email: BHDDH.AskDD@bhddh.ri.gov

ESPAÑOL: 401.462.3014

Division of Developmental Disabilities - All Staff Contacts 2/16/2024

Main Phone #: (401) 462-3421 **TDD:** (401) 462-3226 **Website:** <https://bhddh.ri.gov/>
Fax: (401) 462-2775 **Spanish Line:** (401) 462-3014 **BH Link:** (401) 414-5465
To report abuse/neglect: (401) 462-2629

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CASE MANAGEMENT UNITS

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Dayna	Hansen	Social Caseworker II	462-2505	Dayna.Hansen@bhddh.ri.gov
Judy	Smith	Social Caseworker II	462-1327	Judith.Smith@bhddh.ri.gov
Vacant				

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Vacant				
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Jill	Murphy	Social Caseworker II	462-2409	Jill.Murphy@bhddh.ri.gov
Kim	Wright	Information Aide	462-2584	Kimberly.Wright@bhddh.ri.gov
SIS UNIT				
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Stephanie	Andreozzi	Implementation Aide	462-1859	Stephanie.Andreozzi@bhddh.ri.gov
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Meaghan	Jencks	Social Caseworker II	462-2113	Meaghan.Jencks@bhddh.ri.gov
Vacant				
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Laurie	Rossi	Implementation Aide	462-2563	Laurie.Rossi@bhddh.ri.gov

SELF-EMPLOYMENT ONLINE Classes for People with Disabilities, Families and Community Agencies

NEXT CLASS STARTING April 9, 2024



Do you know a person with a disability or other individual who has a hobby or idea for a possible business or who needs more support for an existing small business? If so, our **FREE ONLINE ZOOM Business Classes** can help the person to learn all about self-employment and available resources for their business idea and financial future! Traditional employment in jobs may not be the best option for some people with disabilities. Small business ownership is another option and great choice to do work that has *real meaning* for the person. It is something people can control themselves and to sell a product or a service they really love. There are over 100 people with disabilities in RI and many others who have started their own businesses in the last few years.

Here's what Michael Coyne, business owner of "*Red, White and Brew Café*" in Warwick, RI has to say:

WHY CHOOSE SELF-EMPLOYMENT?

1. I love being my own "BOSS", meeting new people and spending my time working on something I really enjoy every day!
2. I decide my own flexible work schedule and hours.
3. The Business Classes helped me to learn skills for problem solving, communication, marketing, and self-advocacy. I met other great people with disabilities who also own their own businesses. I received a few grants from the Project and the Fogarty Foundation to buy the materials/supplies I needed for my business.
4. I have assistance through my personal support network, my Business Team and RIDDC who are there to help me with my business.
5. I am no longer "*volunteering*" my time at a job, but instead I have my own business making money and I now have a steady income!



The RI Developmental Disabilities Council (RIDDC) offers a FREE Business Development Series of 8 Classes, ONLINE through ZOOM Meetings. The new Series will start on April 9, 2024 and scheduled every Tuesday for 9 weeks. The classes will assist people to learn the right business skills and access resources to become profitable RI small business owners! Mini-grants up to \$1000.00+ are available to people completing classes, homework and starting their businesses from DLT funding and the John E. Fogarty Foundation.

The Classes provide business advice, resources and ongoing peer and staff support to participants, families and staff and contact with experienced Business Advisors. They know how to work with people to develop good business plans, marketing ideas, and set goals the person can achieve in the industry he/she launches. The Series includes: 1. Is Entrepreneurship Right for You? 2. Steps to Start a Small Business, 3. Identifying Your Target Market, 4. Creating an "*Elevator Pitch*" about Your Service/Product(s), 5. Writing a Good Business Plan, 6. Finances, Bookkeeping, & Community Resources, 7. Marketing, and 8. Using Social Media to Promote your Business.

To Register for this Class or For More Information Call Claudia Lowe at 738-3960 or Sue Babin at 523-2300. (Participation Is Limited!)

This project is funded by DLT's and the Governor's Workforce Board's (GWB) "Real Jobs RI" initiative.

Person-Centered Thinking Facilitator Training

**This free course is designed for those supporting persons with
I/DD living in Rhode Island**

Next course starts on April 1

This course teaches the knowledge and skills the facilitator needs to get ready for the person-centered planning process, including creating the plan and putting the plan into action with an individual.



Course dates:

April 1 - June 4, 2024

This course takes place over three months and requires approximately 40 hours of online learning including readings, quizzes and assignments. Learners will participate in four instructor-led group sessions using Zoom.

The required group sessions take place from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on:

- April 9
- April 23
- May 14
- June 4

**For questions, contact the
Sherlock Center:**

Vanessa Hollands
Email: vhollands@ric.edu
Voice: 401-456-8072
TTY: 711

To register or learn more, visit
our website at
www.sherlockcenter.org.

You will find this training listed
under Events, Education &
Training.



The Link Center invites you to participate in its Shared Learning Groups virtual gathering series.

These Shared Learning Groups are an opportunity to dive into important topics and tap into your expertise and experiences related to people with cognitive disabilities, including I/DD, brain injury and others, and MH conditions. These meetings will be led by members of our Steering Committee and project partners.

Please join us for our next Shared Learning Groups as we discuss
"Supporting Someone Through a Transition".

Live Captioning and ASL Interpretation will be provided during all live webinars.

There are four sessions on the same topic for different target audiences. Please register for the session most relevant to you.

Advanced registration is required.

<u>April 23, 2024</u>	<u>April 24, 2024</u>
<p>Direct Support Professionals: 1:00-2:30p EST</p> <p>Register in advance for this webinar: https://nasddds-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Wp5NlusrTIm86VVnLievfg</p> <p>Clinical Professionals: 3:00-4:30p EST</p> <p>Register in advance for this webinar: https://nasddds-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oCqGrho_TDKtF8IRSXEslw</p>	<p>Families of people with lived experience: 1:00-2:30p EST</p> <p>Register in advance for this webinar: https://nasddds-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TQicS1sISduUBYw5Un6f6Q</p> <p>People with lived experience: 3:00-4:30p EST</p> <p>Register in advance for this webinar: https://nasddds-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_PHiAmlp1Tby2L2megKqy_w</p>

Upcoming quarterly Shared Learning Groups topics:

August 2024: Supporting the Whole Person

This project is supported, in part by grant number 90DDMH0001-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects with government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official ACL policy

SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT PROGRAM

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION



REGISTER HERE

Event: Why I Chose Self-Direction

Time: March 26 at 6:00 PM

Location: [Zoom \[r20.rs6.net\]](https://r20.rs6.net)

The RIPIN Self-Directed Support Program presents a **Community Information Session with Advocates in Action** on **March 26, 2024, from 6:00 to 7:00 PM**. Join us for an opportunity to hear firsthand accounts from individuals who have chosen the path of self-direction and gain valuable insights into why they made this choice.

Key Features

- **Personal Narratives:** Listen to peer advocates who have embarked on self-directed services. Explore the reasons and personal experiences that led them to choose this approach to managing their services and support.
- **Benefits of Self-Direction:** Gain a deeper understanding of the benefits experienced by individuals who have opted for self-direction. Learn how this approach has helped them reach their goals.
- **Interactive Q&A:** Engage in a question-and-answer session with the advocates. Have the opportunity to ask specific questions, seek advice, and connect with those who have navigated the self-directed support journey.

Who Should Attend: This webinar is designed for individuals with disabilities, family members, caregivers, and anyone curious about the personal motivations and experiences of those who have chosen self-direction. Whether you are considering, new, or experienced in self-direction, this session offers something for everyone. Register now to be part of the Community Information Session with Advocates in Action and gain valuable insights into the transformative power of self-directed support.

To secure your spot, please [RSVP \[r20.rs6.net\]](https://r20.rs6.net) [\[r20.rs6.net\]](https://r20.rs6.net) [by March 25th \[r20.rs6.net\]](https://r20.rs6.net). The presentation will be recorded and made available to all registrants after the event concludes. So, whether you can make it or not, we encourage you to register so that you can receive a link to the recording.

About RIPIN Community Information Sessions (CIS)

RIPIN's Community Information Sessions (CIS) are a unique opportunity to connect with experts in the field, gain valuable insights, and discover resources that can make a meaningful impact on your journey of self-directed support. Whether you are an individual who self-directs services, a family member, or a caregiver, our CIS sessions are designed to equip you with the knowledge and tools needed to make informed decisions and achieve greater independence.

RIPIN is committed to providing universal access to all of our events. Please contact communicationsteam@ripin.org to request disability accommodations (e.g., sign language interpreters, alternative formats). Advance notice is necessary to arrange for some accessibility needs.



JOIN ATAP AS WE CELEBRATE

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS DAY!



✓ REGISTER NOW

**APRIL 3, 2024
2:30-5:30
WARWICK PUBLIC LIBRARY**

We will celebrate with guest speakers, displays of assistive technology, and refreshments!

**We will also be presenting the Assistive Technology Access
Partnership AT Champion Award!**

The ATAP Assistive Technology Champion Award was established in 2023. It is the Rhode Island Assistive Technology Access Partnership's (ATAP) award recognizing outstanding achievements of an individual or agency that champions the use of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.

Nominees for this award are individuals using AT to reach their goals and maximize their independence or agencies/programs/advocates that have impacted the lives of individuals with disabilities in the area of assistive technology.

The award nominee can be a(n):
Individual with disabilities who uses AT;
Professional providing services; or
Agency/Program/Advocate working on behalf of individuals with disabilities.

**To nominate an individual for this award,
please use the QR code:**

