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## Autism Acceptance Month

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Disability Rights Connecticut is a statewide non-profit organization with a mission to advocate for the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities in Connecticut.

Published by CT Mirror

### **CT aims to build disability workforce 'pipeline'**

**Advocates say businesses that claim 'labor shortage' have overlooked thousands of potential employees**

### **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

#### **Advisory Board for Persons who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind**

Friday, April 8, 2022  
10 a.m. - noon via Video  
[Link to Event](#)

#### **Webinar on Special Education**

Wednesday, April 20, 2022  
4:00 - 5:00 p.m. via Zoom  
[Link to Register](#)

(HARTFORD, CT) – On any given day at the Palm & Able warehouse in Bridgeport, Latasha “LJ” Jones might be assembling retail displays, conducting quality checks or picking and packing shipments of medical supplies.

Jones has an intellectual disability, but she has tackled myriad assignments at the warehouse; she’s currently training to fulfill orders using e-commerce software.

...

But leaders and advocates in the disability community say capable workers like Jones, who have a wide range of skills and abilities, are being overlooked by companies that have open jobs to fill — even as many business groups raise concerns about a labor shortage.

...

**“We’re particularly concerned that, although the state has a number of initiatives, and those are certainly necessary initiatives, they’re not sufficient to address the problems,” said Debbie Dorfman, executive director of Disability Rights Connecticut.**

...

**The lack of data is another big problem, Dorfman said,**

### **Keep the Promise Alliance Monthly Meeting**

Wednesday, April 20, 2022  
10:00 -12:00 p.m. via Zoom  
To RSVP Email: [KTPAdmin@cahs.org](mailto:KTPAdmin@cahs.org)

### **DDS North Region - Regional Advisory and Planning Council Meeting**

Wednesday, April 20, 2022  
5 - 7 p.m. via Zoom  
[Link to Event](#)

### **DDS - West Regional Advisory and Planning Committee Meeting**

Thursday, April 21, 2022  
4 p.m.  
[Link to Event](#)

### **Council on Developmental Services Meeting**

Thursday, April 21, 2022  
4:30 p.m. via Zoom  
[Link to Event](#)

### **PCA Workforce Council**

Tuesday, April 26, 2022  
9:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.  
[Link to Event](#)

### **DDS - Camp Harkness Advisory Committee Meeting**

Thursday, April 28, 2022  
10:30 a.m.  
[Link to Event](#)

### **The Color of Autism: Raising Awareness at the Capitol**

Friday, April 29, 2022  
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

[Link to Event](#)

**which makes it hard to understand the scope and scale of need among the disability community and businesses.**

**“There needs to be much, much better integration between the systems, and they need to talk to each other,” she said. “Just having the work group isn’t going to be enough.”**

...

[Click to read more.](#)

**DRCT Board of Directors**

- Kathryn DuPree (President)
- Christina Calabro (V. President)
- James Ross (Treasurer)
- Lisa Nee (Secretary)
- Sara Liss (PAC Chair)
- Denise Drummond
- Audrey Felsen
- John Mehm
- Bonnie Clark

**We are currently looking for additional board members, and PAIMI Advisory Council members.**

**If interested, please contact [Deborah.Dorfman@DisRightsCT.org](mailto:Deborah.Dorfman@DisRightsCT.org)**

## Announcements

### Upcoming Webinar: Special Education

**Disability Rights Connecticut, the Connecticut Legal Rights Project, and the Center for Children's Advocacy present a free webinar:**

#### Special Education

**Wednesday, April 20, 2022  
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. EST**

This webinar is funded by a grant from the CT Developmental Disabilities Council.

Speakers from legal advocacy organizations will be presenting on the rights of students with disabilities in Special Education. Speakers include:

- Deborah Dorfman, Executive Director/Attorney, Disability Rights Connecticut
- Kathleen Flaherty, JD, Executive Director, Connecticut Legal Rights Project
- Bonnie Roswig, JD, Program Director, Center for Children's Advocacy

Live captioning, and interpreters in the following languages will be available: American Sign Language (ASL) and Spanish.

For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation: Contact Kayle Hill at 475-345-3423 or [Kayle.Hill@DisRightsCT.org](mailto:Kayle.Hill@DisRightsCT.org)

**Link to register:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEIcepj8jG9aZobs0ha5vAbkOmf3b2ii->

Register Today

### Save the Date!

**The Color of Autism: Raising Awareness at the Capitol**

Friday, April 29, 2022, 10 AM – 3 PM

Event Location:  
CT State Capitol  
210 Capitol Avenue,  
Hartford, Connecticut

**Co-Moderators**

**Denise Drummond**  
CWCSEO  
African American  
Policy Analyst

**Michael Whilby**  
DRCT  
Strategic Partnerships  
Manager

For more information contact: [Denise.Drummond@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Denise.Drummond@cga.ct.gov) or [Michael.Whilby@disrightset.org](mailto:Michael.Whilby@disrightset.org)

## The Color of Autism: Raising Awareness at the Capitol

**Friday, April 29, 2022  
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**Co-Moderators:  
Denise Drummond, CWCSEO  
African American Policy Analyst  
&  
Michael Whilby, DRCT  
Strategic Partnerships Manager**

**Connecticut State Capitol**

**210 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106**

**For more information contact: [Denise.Drummond@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Denise.Drummond@cga.ct.gov) or  
[Michael.Whilby@DisrightsCT.org](mailto:Michael.Whilby@DisrightsCT.org)**

The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity (CWCSEO) and Disability Rights CT (DRCT) present: ***The Color of Autism: Raising Awareness at the State Capitol***. Please Save the Date for this momentous occasion and join us on **Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 10 AM** for a full-day of activities in support of Autism advocacy at the Capitol. This advocacy day will include personal impacted stories from our multi-cultural panel of speakers that includes State officials, legislators, individuals with autism, as well as parents of autistic children. Information tables will be set up and various organizations will share materials, information, and resources. We will be hosting this event outdoors so a rain date will be announced depending on the weather. This event is free and open to the general public. The public is highly encouraged to attend. Interpreters will be available in the following languages: American Sign Language and Spanish. If you need interpretation services in another language, please let us know before April 15, 2022. For more information contact [Denise.Drummond@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Denise.Drummond@cga.ct.gov) or [Michael.Whilby@disrightsct.org](mailto:Michael.Whilby@disrightsct.org)

## Job Opening Administrative Assistant



### **Administrative Assistant**

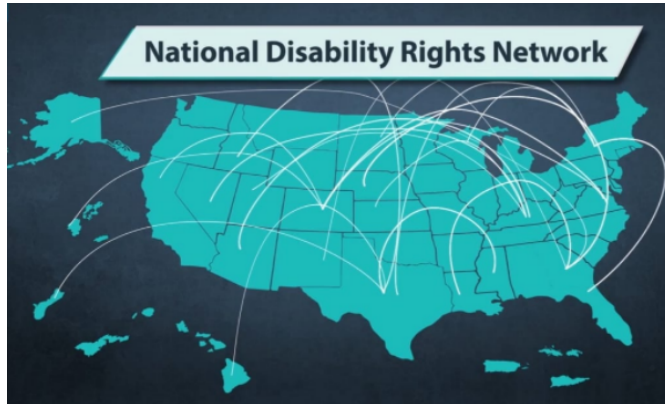
(5 hours/day, 25 hours/week)  
Hybrid (part office/part remote)

The Administrative Assistant will provide administrative, clerical, and limited technical support to the Executive Director, the Executive Deputy Director, and the Director of Finance and Administration. This position requires someone who is self-directed, versatile, adaptable to changes in priorities, independent but very much a team player on the administrative team.

[Click here for the Job Description](#)

## National Protection & Advocacy Annual Conference

**The 2022 P&A/CAP Annual Conference is a two-part event this year!**



Attendees outside of the P&A/CAP Network may register for those sessions open to the general public at a cost of \$25 per session. Fees are payable by credit card online or by mailing a check to NDRN after completing the registration form. Please note that a 3% processing fee will be added to any registrations paid by credit card.

Week One: Virtual event April 25, 2022 - April 29, 2022.

Week Two: In-person event June 6 - 9 in Crystal City, VA.

[Click here for more information](#)

## COVID-Corner

**Protect Yourself, Get Boosted!**





**The CDC approved booster shots for Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, and Pfizer. You are not required to show documentation regarding your pre-existing medical conditions.**

**For people who have already received 2 doses of the Moderna or Pfizer shot, you are eligible for a booster shot if:**

- You are 5 or older
- Or if you are 18 or older and one or more of the following apply:
  - Work in a high-risk environment (such as a hospital or healthcare facility)
  - Are in a long-term care facility (such as a nursing home)
  - Have certain underlying medical conditions (such as cancer)
  - AND it has been at least 6 months since you received your second dose of Moderna or Pfizer

**For people who have already received the Johnson & Johnson shot, you are eligible for a booster shot if:**

- It has been at least 2 months since you received the J&J vaccine
- You then are eligible for a booster dose of any of the following COVID-19 vaccines: Moderna, Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson

**If you would like to receive the booster shot:**

- Go to the Connecticut Vaccine Portal [https://portal.ct.gov/Vaccine-Portal?language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/Vaccine-Portal?language=en_US)

**Order free COVID-19 Home Test Kits**

- Call 1-800-232-0233 or go online to <https://www.covidtests.gov/>

**Vaccines for Children:**

- Kids ages 5 to 11 can now receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, which has been proven safe and effective in protecting them from infection and illness from the virus.  
[https://portal.ct.gov/vaccine-portal/kids?language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/vaccine-portal/kids?language=en_US)

**If you are homebound due to any medical conditions and would like the booster shot:**

- Fill out the homebound intake form  
<https://dphsubmissions.ct.gov/homebound>

**If you would like to retrieve your immunization record**

- Go to the Connecticut WiZ: Immunization Information Public Portal  
[https://ctwiz.dph.ct.gov/ctwiz\\_public/Application/PublicPortal](https://ctwiz.dph.ct.gov/ctwiz_public/Application/PublicPortal)

**If you are experiencing disability-related accessibility barriers, please call DRCT at (800) 842-7303 or email [info@DisRightsCT.org](mailto:info@DisRightsCT.org).**

[Click to see Information on the CDC Website](#)

**Need a ride? Transportation is available for people who want the COVID-19 Vaccine.**



**Call the Vaccine Appointment Assistance Line at (877) 918-2224 to schedule your COVID vaccine appointment AND get connected with a ride to and from your appointment.**

The Vaccine Appointment Assist Line can also provide assistance to those who face language and technology barriers and those who are Deaf, Hard-of-hearing, or DeafBlind.

Residents can also subscribe to text message COVID-19 alerts from the state by texting the keyword **COVIDCT** to **888-777**.

## Other Updates

# National Assistive Technology Awareness Day is Wednesday, April 6, 2022!

Consider sharing what AT means to you on social media using the hashtag **#ATAwarenessDay**.

## Seeking People to Join the Connecticut REV UP Coalition

The REV UP Voting Campaign is a nonpartisan national voting initiative focused on advancing the power of the disability vote. Our mission is to foster civic engagement and protect the voting rights of Americans with disabilities. REV UP stands for "Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!"

Contact Molly Cole to join the monthly meetings.

**[Email Molly Cole at Molly@CTSILC.org](mailto:Molly@CTSILC.org)**





## Connecticut Cross Disability Lifespan Alliance is Seeking Steering Committee Members



**If you or someone you know is interested in being nominated to serve on the CCDLA Steering Committee, please read the qualifications below.**

**Steering Committee Members need to fit in one of the following categories:**

There will be seventeen members of the Steering Committee as follows:

- **4 Representatives from the Alliance funders/sponsors: One from each of the following: CT Council on Developmental Disabilities, UCEDD, Disability Rights Connecticut, SILC.**
- 3 Representatives from other agencies or organizations, other than the sponsor agencies.
- 10 people with disabilities or family members. ***At least six of these must be people with disabilities.***
- The Alliance Coordinator will be an ex officio (non-voting) member of the Steering Committee.

**If you or someone you know is interested in being nominated for election to the Alliance Steering Committee please complete this form: [CCDLA Nominating Form](#) Submit it to [molly@ctsilc.org](mailto:molly@ctsilc.org) before April 20, 2022. The Steering Committee will meet on April 21 to review all nominations and develop the slate for election in May. **YOU CAN NOMINATE YOURSELF OR SOMEONE ELSE.****

## Community Engagement

**DRCT gave a voting rights presentation to the residents of the DDS facility, Lower Fairfield Center on Wednesday, March 9, 2022.**



Staff Pictured from left-to-right: Kasey Considine (Staff Attorney), Marissa Rivera (Advocate), and Deborah Dorfman (Executive Director/Attorney)

## Let's Connect!

Disability Rights Connecticut works with individuals with disabilities, their families, and community partners to understand common goals, priorities, and visions. DRCT staff provides outreach and training to establish and maintain community relationships and implement strategies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

DRCT can provide training, upon request, on issues related to our focus areas. If you believe you, or a group you are a member of, could benefit from training, please contact our Strategic Partnerships Manager, Michael Whilby at 860-856-4158 or [Michael.Whilby@DisRightsCT.org](mailto:Michael.Whilby@DisRightsCT.org)

**DRCT gave a presentation to the DeafBlind community at the Communication Advocacy Network in Hartford, CT on Thursday, March 23, 2022.**

Pictured: Sue Pedersen (CAN Director), Marissa Rivera (DRCT Advocate), and Cheri Hembree (CAN Coordinator).



**Deborah Dorfman,  
Executive Director/Attorney**

**Disability Rights Connecticut  
860-297-4300**

[info@DisRightsCT.org](mailto:info@DisRightsCT.org)



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[Click Here to Request our Services](#)

**Open and Affirming Statement:**  
Disability Rights Connecticut is open and affirming and welcomes all people regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression, nationality, or any disability.



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