



POSITIVE ABILITIES

Department of Administration

October 2022

Office of Executive Policy and Programs

MISSION: *The mission of the South Carolina Developmental Disabilities Council is to provide leadership in planning, funding, and implementing initiatives that lead to improved quality of life for people with developmental disabilities and their families through advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change.*

State of South Carolina Governor's Proclamation

WHEREAS, South Carolina is driven to improve disability employment and recognized the need to change legislation to end subminimum wage and encourage Employment First throughout state agencies; and

WHEREAS, South Carolinians with disabilities have the same aspirations to work competitively and contribute to their communities as everyone else; and

WHEREAS, business and community leaders have called for a diverse and capable workforce to further advance the economy of the Palmetto State; and

WHEREAS, the support and cooperation of all people are needed to reduce the attitudinal and physical barriers that hinder the full acceptance of people with disabilities and their rightful place in employment; and

WHEREAS, Employment First, that employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities regardless of level of disability, is implemented in all areas of service provision and delivery for people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, National Disability Employment Awareness Month recognizes that individuals with disabilities are capable, contributing members of society worthy of full access and inclusion in South Carolina's workforce.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Henry McMaster, Governor of the great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim October 2022 as

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to work together to advance the message that people with disabilities are equal to the task.



HENRY McMASTER
GOVERNOR
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



South Carolina
**PARTNERS in
POLICYMAKING**



**Sarah Pope, CEO
SOS Health Care, Inc.**

Sarah Pope is a graduate of the Partners in Policymaking[®] program. Her disability journey began when she was in high school, she worked as a residential social worker in group homes for the National Autistic Society.

She is the Chief Executive Officer of SOS Health Care, Inc., where she focuses on Leadership, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Intellectual Disabilities Program Development, Affordable Low-Income Housing Community Development, Management, and Fundraising.

Her passion for advocacy is driven by the need to level the playing field for people with disabilities. Sarah believes, “We all deserve equal opportunities to live our best lives.” What captured Sarah’s interest in Partners in Policymaking[®] was that her son was diagnosed with autism. During that time there were no services available that met his individual unique needs.

She took it upon herself to be the best advocate for him, and to make larger system changes in the state of South Carolina. The best part of advocating for her is teaching her boys and others in SOS Care’s programs to advocate for themselves. When people with disabilities learn how powerful their voices are many great things happen.

SOS Health Care, Inc. Making a Difference



SOS Employment Services is providing customized employment for job seekers. SOS Care Inc works with Griffin Hammis Associates for mentoring and technical assistance. They have created training webinars that outline the customized employment process with participants and job coaches, sharing with collaborative agencies, families, and individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities across the state of South Carolina.

Meet Ezra and Lilly!



Ezra

Ezra has worked at Bojangles in Conway, SC for over a year. Bojangles is a supportive partner for SOS Care and employs program participants in several Grand Strand area restaurants.

Lilly lives in Charleston and is currently interning with Respite Care Charleston, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing support to caregivers, and those living with Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia.



Lilly



The Thematic Unit on construction jobs/skills program teaches students site practices. They work on vocabulary, tool/clothing identification, and skills needed to participate in a job which requires building experience. They completed their final project which was to build their own bird house.

During October, one of the groups will be visiting the Lexus Dealership to learn about different types of jobs around the dealership. Another group will have Carolina Studios traveling production studio come out to get hands on practice embracing creativity by creating beats, songs, and learning more about the music production industry.



APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED ALL YEAR

Partners in Policymaking® is a leadership training program that teaches adults with disabilities and parents how to be community leaders and how to advocate for themselves and others.

Participants come to Columbia once a month for five months to receive information, training and resources about local, state, and national issues that affect people with disabilities.

Participants in the Partners in Policymaking® program are expected to attend:

- Five two-day sessions, one weekend per month
- Sessions begin at 12:00 p.m. on Friday and conclude by 4:30 p.m. on Saturday.

PARTICIPANTS ARE REIMBURSED FOR TRAVEL COSTS TO AND FROM COLUMBIA.

LODGING & MEALS PROVIDED. PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE DINNER FRIDAY AND BREAKFAST AND LUNCH ON SATURDAY.

ATTENDANT SUPPORT AND RESPITE REIMBURSEMENT PROVIDED FOR PARTICIPANTS WHO MEET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.

For more information, go to
<https://www.sccdc.state.sc.us/resources.html>
or call 803-734-0465





Council News

DD Council Member Michelle Barefoot, displays the flowers and plaque she received when she was awarded October Employee of the Month at Johnsonville Pee Dee Thrift Store. She has worked a total of 12 years at the Thrift Stores in Lake City, Scranton and now in Johnsonville.

When asked about her job Michelle just smiles and says, I do whatever they ask me to do, because I love my job and I love working here.

Michelle brings that infectious attitude to the Council and is a strong self-advocate within her community.

Congratulations Michelle!



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SOUTH CAROLINA
Developmental Disabilities Council

SOUTH CAROLINA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

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For program funding details, please visit <https://www.scdde.state.sc.us/about.html>