Ability 1st Utah

Promoting Independence for People with Disabilities

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Values Statement

Educate, Respect,
Advocate, Support

5K/1k 2025

Runners, walkers, and those using assistive mobility devices of all ages and abilities will make the day an experience to remember! This race is an opportunity for service, fun, awareness, and prizes. It is a sanctioned race by US Track and Field. Our race will be held on September 20, 2025.

COME AND PARTICIPATE IN OUR 2024 RACE!

Nursing Home Transition Success Story 2024

In August, Christopher suffered a nasty heart attack that landed him in the hospital. He was unable to walk well and required a lot of assistance with his personal care needs. His daughter called me and asked about what we at Ability 1st could assist him with getting that could assist him with this. We discussed options and she determined that he needed a cane, a toilet riser with handles, a transfer bench and a hospital bed. I told her that she could work with his insurance on getting the hospital bed with a prescription from his doctor. I told her that we could assist him with getting the cane, toilet riser and the transfer bench so that he could walk and navigate around his daughter's home and care for his personal care needs independently in his home and return to the community. These items were delivered to his daughter's home where he was going to be staying and he was able to come home from the hospital and increase his independence in the community.

Ticket To Work Program Success Story 2024

Paula called Ability 1st Utah Employment Services on December 4, 2022 to enquire about the Ticket to Work Program. The three requirements to participate in the program (Age 18 to 64, eligibility for SSDI/SSI benefits and a goal to work towards financial independence) was explained. The Services, work incentives and benefits counseling available to support employment goals was discussed. Paula was currently attending Utah State University to earn her Master's Degree in Psychology and was expecting to graduate in August of 2024. She felt she was ready to search for employment in the field of her study to begin her career in Psychology while she completed her studies. She set her goals and assigned her ticket with Ability 1st Utah Employment Services on January 30, 2023. During Employment Counseling a discussion came up about a job position I knew of with Wasatch Behavioral Health working as a Case Manager that could give Paula experience in the field of Psychology and Social Work. She and I searched on the Wasatch Behavioral Health website and there was a position available. She submitted her resume and was hired on February 29, 2023. During a meeting in May of 2023 Paula talked about some barriers she encountered on the worksite. She and I met for Disability Disclosure and Reasonable Accommodation counseling to give her the skills needed to request Reasonable Accommodations from her employers and to understand her rights under the American with Disability Act (ADA). This removed barriers she was experiencing that has allowed her to be successful in maintaining her employment. The Benefits Counseling services Paula receives in the program educates her about the Work Incentives available and the affects her earnings have on SSDI and Medicare benefits so she can prepare for these changes. Paula is graduated with her Master's Degree in Psychology and since Paula began her employment with Wasatch Behavioral Health she has increased her hours to working full-time with employee benefits and has earned raises and a promotion from her position as a Case Manager to a Counselor at the Residential Substance Facility.

Ability 1st Utah
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2024
As of September 30, 2024

This Year's Goals:

- Our Employment Network's **12th** year in operation! We have **21** beneficiaries assigned this year
- Number of participants served **1,340**
- Information & Referral services **674.**
- **Outreach efforts:**
  33 Presentations
  11 Fairs.

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Mission Statement

To recognize, advocate, and respect each individual's right and ability to realize their deserved quality of life.

This will be accomplished by identifying needs, providing resources, strengthening abilities, and advocating social and political change for individuals with disabilities.

Vision Statement

To Integrate, Build, & Strengthen Abilities for All Individuals with Disabilities.

Celebrating 24 Years in Business!

Ability 1st Utah is celebrating our 24th year in business as a non-residential, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is committed to the Independent Living Philosophy.

Our Center assists each individual to live independently. We provide programs and services to people of any age with any type of disability in Utah,

Ability 1st Utah's 5 Core Services:

- Advocacy for Individual & Systems change
- Peer Support
- Information & Referrals
- Independent Living Skills Training
- Nursing Home & Youth Transition Services

All towards the goal of helping individuals reach independence and self sufficiency in their chosen environment.

In addition to our core services, we provide Assistive Technology evaluation services, program specific transportation, and maintain an equipment loan bank. It consists of used adaptive equipment to loan at no cost. We also have community integration activities and offer a Youth Program. Ability 1st Utah's programs truly empowers people with disabilities to live productive, successful, and self-determined lives.

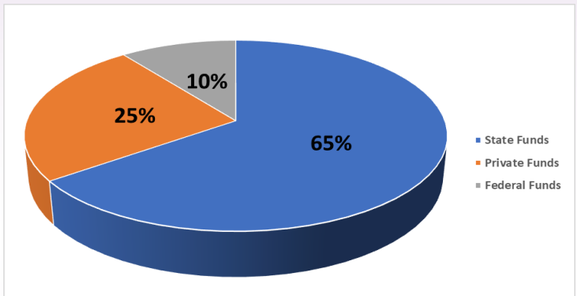
Thank You to Our 2024 5K -1K Run, Walk & Roll Race Sponsors!

CASH DONORS		IN-KIND DONORS	
Central Bank	$10,000	Splash Summit Resort	$1250
Zions Bank	$1,500	Marriott Hotel	$279
America First Credit Union	$500	Vision Wear International	$300
Bank of Utah	$400	DHI– Parking	$250
NuSkin	$1,100	Jersey Mikes	$1800
Denny's	$400	Scheels	$250
Stryker	$650	Olive Garden	$450
UCCU	$500	Texas Roadhouse	$200

Customer Services Received

	FY2023	FY2024
Number of Participants	1214	1340
Information & Referral Services	874	674
Total Individual Services Received	3311	3211
Nursing Home Transitions	7	8
Diversion Services	27	58
Assistive Technology Services	276	297

Total Funding: $1,404,433.00



Youth Program Success Story 2024

Success Story 1: From Struggling Socially to Thriving with his Peers in Summer Program Activities
Participant Name: Taylor
Program Involvement: Summer program
Taylor joined the summer program showing signs of low self-esteem and limited interest in social interactions with his peers. During this program, Taylor discovered a passion for his peers in team-building and community integration activities. He particularly excelled with our peer support focus where he helped direct his peers when they needed encouragement, and started to become more socially involved with his peers and teachers.
By the end of the summer, Taylor showed a positive change: where he was advocating for his own and his peers' needs more effectively. Taylor expressed that the skills he learned during the program gave him a clearer sense of his communication skills, peer support, self-advocacy and community involvement

Success Story 2: Speaking Up for Self-Advocacy
Participant Name: Suzy
Program Involvement: Youth Program Center Classes
Suzy struggled with expressing her needs and to ask questions when she wasn't understanding a particular topic. Throughout the year during our self-advocacy lessons and community integration. Suzy picked up practical strategies to communicate effectively, such as using "I" statements and learned how to self-regulate under pressure.
Throughout the youth program, Suzy has shown significant growth, especially with her leadership skills. Suzy would practice asking for accommodations for herself and others confident of her supportive environment. Suzy would also join in to offer her teacher help in some lessons throughout the year, and assisted in de-escalating some potential arguments among her peers. I have seen and noticed a lot of growth in Suzy!

Success Story 3: Empowering Confidence
Participant Name: Trista
Program Involvement: Youth Program School Classes
Trista was initially shy when it came to participating in group activities during school lessons. Through consistent encouragement and involvement with our weekly life skills, peer support and self-advocacy classes. Trista gained the confidence to start speaking up more and started to engage with her peers more.
Feedback from both Trista and her teachers highlighted a newfound sense of pride and determination, as well as improved communication skills that carried over to her schoolwork.

Executive Message

By Sandra M. Curcio, Executive Director

I am excited to bring you the 2024 annual report for Ability 1st Utah. This is our 24h year in business and we had some successes as well as some challenges .This year's successes is that our center provided services to 1340 individuals with disabilities. We assisted 8 people in transitioning out of an institution and we diverted 58 people from going into an institution. We also assisted 297 with assistive technology services. We also assisted 21 Beneficiaries with services from our Employment Network. The challenges have been with staffing. We have had several staff leave for Even with these challenges we have kept services moving forward . Also We are still seeking funding for an elevator for our building.

Our 21th annual "5K-1k Run, Walk and Roll" race was a great success due to the support we received from all of our sponsors and racers. This success would not be possible without enormous effort and dedication of all the Ability 1st Utah staff, volunteers and Board Members.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, we hope the annual report gives you a glimpse of the impact Ability 1st Utah has made on the many lives of people with disabilities this last year.

Visit to Splash Summit

Equipment & Other Services Success Stories

Assistive Technology

Doris's mother Esme, contacted Ability 1st Utah in October of 2023 to get assistance with getting a ramp. Doris has cerebral palsy, is blind and experiences seizures. When I assisted Doris's mother with getting her signed up for services with Ability 1st Utah, Doris had been living at Provo Care Center for people with developmental disabilities for the past 5 years and due to needing a wheelchair to access her living space and was not able to visit her mother's home due to the house having steps in order to access it. Then, in September of 2023, Provo Care Center was bought out and the residents needed to find new places to live. Esme decided that she wanted Doris to come and live with her but in order to do so, would require a ramp in order for Doris to access the home. Ability 1st was able to facilitate an evaluation to see what size of ramp was needed and then contacted Accessible Solutions for the purchase and installation of the ramp. In December of 2023, funding for the ramp was authorized through the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and then, on January 9, 2024, Doris was able to move to her mother Esme's home and with the ramp was able to access the community.

Nursing Home Transition:

Felicia has Parkinson's disease and she has a very difficult time walking and with caring for her personal care needs safely and independently in the community. In June 2024, Felicia was admitted to Pointe Meadow's Nursing and Rehabilitation. She had been hospitalized for an illness and her doctors had determined that she needed further care and rehabilitation. I had contacted Felicia to conduct her annual review and found out about her situation. Felecia said that she was going to need assistance with getting a shower chair and 2 grab bars in order to facilitate transitioning from the nursing and rehab facility and staff assisted her with getting the requested equipment. On gust 2, 2024, Felicia was able t return to her home and with the equipment that she had received through the loan bank, was able to care for her personal care needs in her own home.

Veterans Affairs:

I received three referrals from local medical doctors to help veterans who needed to get some Aid and Attendant Care for themselves or their spouse. I was referred to two veterans and to assist one veteran who is 90 years of age and struggling to care for his aging and frail wife. Aging is difficult under the best circumstances but when you are the one aging and your sweetheart, as one veteran described his wife, is struggling to help keep her at home with him things can unravel quickly. It was VM's desire and the desire to his wife that they remain in their home, living their life, for as long as they possibly could. We needed to get them some Aid and Attendance Care fast. Luckily VM's physician was very supportive and helpful. He filled out the documents quickly and we got those into the VA within 72 hours of the referral. When I got back to work after Christmas break, a message left on the answering machine from VM's son in law advised that the VA decided the family would begin receiving extra help (Aid and Attendant Care) in January, 2024.