

Disability Activists and Allies of Maine

Bo Bigelow and Erin Rowan

Meet Bo and Erin!

Bo's story:

- Tess 2009
- USP7 search
- Disability rights



Meet Bo and Erin!

Erin's story:

- Carrigain 2007
- Will - Legislative Affairs
- Inclusion journey



Bo meets Erin

- Political matchmaking from Mainers for Accountable Leadership (MFAL)
- “Who else is going to do it?”

Hillary Clinton, Hope, Fear, and the Birth of DAAM

- RespectAbility #PwDsVote 2016 Campaign Questionnaire for people with disabilities
- Anastasia Somoza at the DNC!
 - Unprecedented attention to disability issues on a national stage.
- #CripTheVote
- The Disability Visibility Project
- Manicures and massages!



Hillary Clinton, Hope, Fear, and the Birth of DAAM

- Wednesday, November 8th
 - Recalibrate
- Threats on multiple fronts
 - Health care/Medicaid
 - Education - DeVos, ESSA, vouchers/school choice, school funding, school consolidation
 - Jeff Sessions as AG
 - Gorsuch on SCOTUS



This budget has it all [backwards](#). You want to change the world? Pass budgets that pay teachers more & fund schools. [@NEAToday](#)



Hillary Clinton, Hope, Fear, and the Birth of DAAM

- Resistance movement where disability is sometimes an afterthought
 - Medicaid/ACA - PWD on the periphery
 - Holding on to the seat at the table



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This budget has it all [backwards](#). You want to change the world? Pass budgets that pay teachers more & fund schools. [@NEAToday](#)



DAAM - Who, What, Why?

- We are non-partisan, grassroots coalition of people with disabilities, parents, providers, educators, and allies.
 - Led by Bo, Erin, Marie Follayttar Smith, and Lisa Wesel

DAAM - Who, What, Why?

- We are stronger together.
 - Amplification of voices by connecting multiple local and national communities
 - Crowdsourcing **calls to action**

DAAM - Who, What, Why?

- People are “woke”
 - Let’s not miss our chance for change and ally building
 - Community Connect Maine - 209 members
 - MFAL - 2,070 members
 - SUM - 4,719 members
- Disability is non-partisan
- Honoring the legacy built by our predecessors
 - The foundation is crumbling

Calls to Action

- ESSA
 - Locally and Nationally
 - Partnership with NDSC
- AHCA
- Gorsuch
 - 120 signatures
- Section 21/DSP rate increase
 - Thanks Cullen and Kim!

Behind the Scenes

- Relationship building with staffers and electeds
 - Drop-ins
 - Conference calls
 - Emails
 - Coffee
 - Calls for Accountability - talk about disability (but only if you mean it)
- Network building
 - DRM
 - Community Connect Maine
- Tracking legislative happenings
 - The hits just keep on coming...

Core Values - a Working List

- Disability is natural and neutral
 - Social model of disability
 - Disability Pride
- Inclusion is a fundamental human right
 - In school
 - In the workplace
 - In the community
- Health care is a fundamental human right
 - HCBS - CFC
- Disabled voices and lives matter
 - Self-advocacy
 - Self-determination and the dignity of risk

What's Next?

- Increase participation – especially by PWDs
- Build connections with the mental health community
- Advocating for a more accessible social justice movement
 - Language
 - Advocacy action items
 - Physical locations
 - Reduce Ableist bias

What's Next - The Wish List

- Ratify UN CRPD (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)
- Protect Medicaid/ACA
 - No cuts, caps, or block grants
 - Preserve Essential Benefit
 - Preserve protections for pre-existing conditions
 - Mental Health Parity
- Defend public education
 - Inclusion - Equity - Decreased segregation
 - Reduce restraint and seclusion
 - Increase funding (including IDEA)
- Reduce/eliminate wait lists for adult services
- Pay increase for DSPs now and in the future

What's on Your List?

Questions?

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