

## **Hello, Council Members!**

This is Jesse Suter, Director of the Center on Disability and community inclusion.

I am a 50-year, White, Bald, man, with short and greying facial hair. I'm wearing a blue and white checkered button up shirt. Behind me is a blurred background of my office with a bookshelf and my window.

I use he/him pronouns.

Your co-chairs, David and Mel wanted to try something new this month.

In this video I will share a few updates and invitations with you before our next meeting. The goal is for us to have more time for discussion during the meeting.

### **The first update is to share some sad news. Adrienne Miao is leaving CDCI and Vermont this summer.**

I am so so sorry to lose her at our Center. And I'm very excited for the reason she's going.

This Fall, Dr. Adrienne Miao will join the faculty at Appalachian State University. She and one of her favorite professors, Jenny Womack, will be launching a new masters program in occupational therapy there.

Adrienne came to our Center during the pandemic in September 2020. She became our community service core function coordinator just a year later.

And she's been an amazing leader at the Center and with the I-Team, Continenence, and PedsPro projects. She's also been a strong advocate for increasing the diversity of our Center. And she's led efforts to collect accurate and meaningful data on disability.

Congratulations, Adrienne. I will miss you, and I hope we find new ways to work together in your new role.

### **Second update, on March 14 I had the honor of attending an event at the White House.**

It was called *Communities in Action: Building a Better Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont*. I attended with Lindsey Owen, council member, and director of Disability Rights Vermont. There were two other people from Vermont, Amy Carmola from the United Way and Michael Campbell a social studies teacher from BFA St. Albans and member of the Union of Vermont Educators.

The event was hosted by the White House Office of Public Engagement. I do not know how they chose people to go. I heard our national association recommended they invite Center directors.

The event was about 4 hours and we heard several members of the President Biden and Vice Presents Kamala Harris' administration.

- Heads of the White House Office of Gun Violence, Greg Jackson and Rob Wilcox Prevention,
- Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra,
- Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Denis McDonough,
- Vermont Senator Peter Welch, and
- Second Gentleman, Douglas Emhoff.

They shared work they have been doing to help communities in all states including Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire.

For this event, I wrote a 2-page summary with several examples of how the administration's work has helped the disability community in Vermont. And how they could do more. I focused on examples in Digital and informational accessibility, Health, Education, and Employment.

There is a link to this summary in our council agenda.

If you have questions or thoughts about the event, please reach out to me directly. I'd be happy to talk with you about it.

**Third update: Each year the Association of University Centers on Disabilities holds a conference in November.**

Last year, Michael, Matthew, Adrienne, and I went. We talked about it at our last CAC meeting.

This year the conference will be November 3-6. This overlaps with the November 5 presidential election.

Please contact me directly if you are interested in going.

And please please let me know if you have an idea for a presentation. We will probably need to propose presentation ideas before our next CAC meeting in June

**And the fourth and last update is this year is our Center's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary!**

We want to plan a celebration and event for this Fall, probably also in November.

I would love to hear your ideas for what this event should include.

During the March CAC meeting you can share feedback during a small group. And you can reach out to me directly.

