

# THE OPEN DOOR

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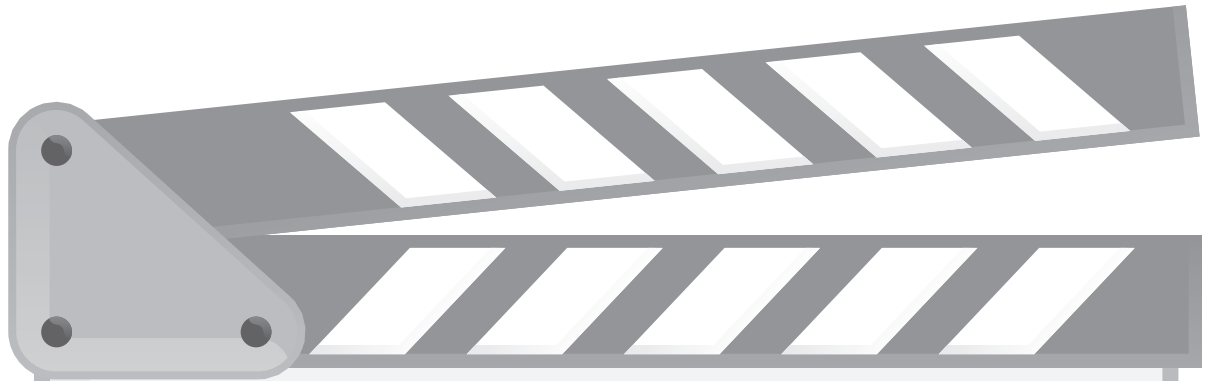
## WHAT'S INSIDE?



**Welcome  
Brittyn Calyx**  
*Page 2*

**Wisconsin  
Peer Specialist  
Employment  
Initiative 2019  
year in review**  
*Page 3*

**Help ACCESS  
shape the  
future in 2020**  
*Page 6*



### TITLE

## Artists Beyond Boundaries

### TAKE

# 2



### SCENE

This past October marked our second annual Artists Beyond Boundaries event! This year's event was a huge success featuring 39 artists with disabilities from around the state showing nearly 70 works of art.

**SEE ARTISTS**  
PAGE 2



Wisconsin artist Lori Kinnard poses with the artwork she submitted to this year's event.

# ACCESS welcomes Brittyn Calyx, Peer Specialist Program Assistant

**B**rittyn Calyx took on the role of Peer Specialist Program Assistant at Access to Independence, the contracting organization for the Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Initiative, in late August 2019. Brittyn began working as a Certified Peer Specialist in Wisconsin in 2014 and has engaged in peer support and training facilitation in a variety of settings including peer-run respites, community centers, institutions, and cafes. Prior to taking on this role with Access to Independence, Brittyn served as a Community

Coordinator with the Western Mass Recovery Learning Community, House Manager with Solstice House Peer-Run Respite in Madison, and DVR Peer Support Specialist with Grassroots Empowerment Project.

Brittyn is grateful that working in peer support offers her an opportunity to uniquely be with others and struggle for human rights while centering principles such as self-determination, the recognition of personal strengths, and healing through relationship and community. In her



Access to Independence is happy to welcome new Peer Specialist Program Assistant Brittyn Calyx.

personal time, Brittyn loves connecting with her family (cats included!), exploring re-

storative nature spots, playing board games, and fully embracing her inner nerd.

## ARTISTS

FROM PAGE 1

Everything from painting, blacksmithing, and woodworking to digital art and more was showcased. The high quality and large variety of this year's work was truly breathtaking.

This year, Access to Independence had the good fortune of partnering with the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art to help with the scoring process. Three docents from MMoCA donated their time and talents to help score all of the artwork received and help us choose this

year's top 12 works of art to be included in our 2020 Artists Beyond Boundaries calendar.

Pick up your free calendar, courtesy of GT Independence, from our office located at 3810 Milwaukee Street, Madison, WI.

**SEE SPONSORS, PAGE 4**

# Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Initiative continues to improve in 2019

The past year has been an exciting time for those of us at Access to Independence working on the Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Initiative. It has been a year of expansion, critical reflection, collaboration, and improvement.

As of today, there are more than 1,400 Certified Peer Specialists (CPS) throughout Wisconsin who are making a difference in a wide range of agencies, organizations, and recovery-focused settings. Certified Peer Specialists are individuals who use their unique lived experience in a professional capacity to support others seeking mental health and/or substance use recovery.

The training, examination, certification and recertification, as well as employer technical assistance for Wisconsin Certified Peer Specialists, and Certified Parent Peer Specialists (CPPS), is coordinated by the Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Initiative in tandem with the UW-Milwaukee School of Continuation and overseen by Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS).



## 2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- The Certified Peer Specialist workforce increased by over 50% this year.
- 243 people took the September 25th CPS exam (an all-time high).
- 3 CPS trainings took place in the Department of Corrections (DOC).
- Individuals taking the exam within DOC had pass rates of over 80%, and now incarcerated Certified Peer Specialists are bringing professional peer support to their peers in prison.
- A number of CPS trainings were offered for various tribal nations throughout Wisconsin.
- Trainers, DHS employees, and Access team members began work on the revised CPS curriculum to hopefully be implemented in 2020.
- The newly developed Certified Peer/Parent Peer Specialist Advisory Committee began developing subcommittees to effectively advise DHS on issues of governance, employment, and professional development related to the initiative.
- Tim Saubers joined Access to Independence in late 2018 as the new Peer Specialist Program Manager and has now had his first full year leading the Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Initiative.
- Brittyn Calyx joined Access to Independence in August 2019 as the new Peer Specialist Program Assistant.
- The Wisconsin Peer Specialist Employment Initiative launched a new and much-improved website in November 2019.



## SPONSORS

FROM PAGE 4

It's hard to find the words to describe how thankful we are to everyone who participated in and attended the 2019 Artists Beyond Boundaries event! We would like to give a quick shout out to the event's sponsors: Access Elevator, Care Wisconsin, GT Independence, RitzHolman CPAs, Summit Credit Union, and Wispact. Thank you for your contributions!

Next, we'd like to thank you all of the event attendees! Whether you were a friend or family member, an art connoisseur, or someone who just happens to enjoy an evening out, we were absolutely delighted to have you a part of the evening!

And lastly, a HUGE thank you to each artist who submitted their work this year! It was such an honor having the chance to exhibit your work and celebrate your talents together.

If you weren't able to attend this year's event, we sincerely look forward to seeing you next year!



Some of the artists who submitted their work to the event pose for the camera.

### OUR 2019 SPONSORS



### HELP ACCESS REDUCE COSTS

By requesting your newsletter in email format, you can help ACCESS reduce printing costs while still receiving the same great information! Contact us today to change how you read *The Open Door*.

# Brief History of the Text Telephone (TTY)

A TTY is a Text Telephone. TTYs can help people with a variety of disabilities utilize the phone by allowing people to type messages back and forth as opposed to having to rely on hearing and vocalizations.

In the 1960s, Robert Weirtbrecht invented the Acoustic Coupler, a device that allows a modem to connect to a voice circuit. This allows text to be transmitted over the phone. This device combined with refurbished news teletype machines created the first TTYs!

However, there were two problems. The first was that TTYs were extremely expensive. Only a few people could afford the \$1,000 machines. To combat the cost issue, a man named Robert Engleke, an electrical engineer

at UW Madison, became interested in making a TTY that was affordable and portable. He began to work in his basement! In 1978, a TTY so small you could carry it in your pocket was put on the market.

The second problem was that you could only communicate TTY to TTY. Luckily, services became available around the country so a person could dial 711 to reach an operator with the Telecommunications Rely Service (TRS). This service provided a person using both a regular phone and a TTY who functioned as a go-between.

It wasn't long before TTYs also had regular phones so people who could speak were able to use both voice and reading.

There are even TTYs that print in Braille for people who are Deaf and Blind.

Most recently, a huge breakthrough came in 2000 when Ultratec – Engelke's company- released the Captioned Telephone (CapTel). This technology makes it possible to have conversations in real time without relying on a TTY. With CapTel phones, a captionist is connected to the call at the beginning and helps transcribe what is being said by the other party, all without dialing 711! Overall process flows much more smoothly.

Who knows where technology will lead us next, but things are certainly moving in the right direction!

## Is ACCESS part of your year-end giving?

**DONATE TODAY!**

**2 EASY  
WAYS TO  
DONATE**

### ONLINE

Visit [www.accesstoind.org](http://www.accesstoind.org) and click the 'Donate' tab.

**CASH or CHECK (payable to ACCESS to Independence):**

3810 Milwaukee St., Madison, WI 53714



# Peer to Peer Opportunity in 2020!

## We Want to Hear Your Thoughts

We are on a mission to offer more programming that brings people together. We would like you to share with us what kinds of activities you would like to see offered to help you learn new things, meet other people, get support, work on issues, or just HAVE FUN!

We are asking people to complete a brief survey about activities that they may be interested in, so we can choose a few areas to build on in the coming year. We also want to know your interests so we can link you to events and activities that may already be happening in your community. Any way that we can help people get connected!

The link to our survey can be found



FILL OUT OUR BRIEF PEER ACTIVITY SURVEY AT  
**WWW.ACCESSTOIND.ORG**

on our Facebook Page or our website at [www.accesstoind.org](http://www.accesstoind.org).

If you prefer to fill out a paper copy, we have them available in our lobby, and are also happy to send you one. Contact Tracy at ACCESS to request that a copy be mailed to you.

## Volunteer

We are also still looking for people who may be interested in volunteering a few hours of their time to be a Peer Mentor with another person with a disability. We have a brief online training that we ask potential volunteers to complete.

They are then placed on a list to possibly be matched with individuals who need a little support and encouragement in areas where the volunteers have valuable life experience to share. If you are interested in becoming a Peer Mentor, please contact Ashley at ACCESS.

We look forward to working together with you in 2020 to increase opportunities to connect with other people to share our common interests and experiences. THANKS for sharing your ideas with us to help us connect in the coming year!



## Join the ACCESS to Independence Board of Directors!

### Talents Needed:

- ✓ Lived experience with a disability
- ✓ Fundraising and development knowledge
- ✓ Non-profit service or management experience
- ✓ Business development experience
- ✓ Marketing or public relations experience
- ✓ Legal background

### Expectations:

- ✓ Attend bi-monthly meetings (2 hours long)
- ✓ Participate in at least one committee (1-2 hour meetings)
- ✓ Participate in agency events, including fundraising events (2-3 times a year)

### Are you interested? We'd love to chat!

Contact Jason Beloungy at 608-242-8484 ext. 233 or via email at [jasonb@accesstoind.org](mailto:jasonb@accesstoind.org)

# WisLoan and TeleWork Loan Programs

## FUNDING INDEPENDENCE

Wisloan and Telework are alternative loan programs that assist Wisconsin residents with disabilities to enable people to become self-employed or to work from home. These loan programs are different than traditional bank loans because a bank doesn't make the final decision, the WisLoan and Telework Board does. That allows flexibility for people who have an item they need to maintain their independence but have trouble coming up with the money all at once, or finding other ways to pay for what they need. Simply call Access to Independence for information 608-242-8484.

## WISLOAN

***What Can I Buy with a WisLoan?*** You can purchase technology such as wheelchairs, computers, ramps, vehicle modifications, or home modifications.

## TELEWORK

***What Can I Buy with a TeleWork Loan?*** You can purchase items such as computers and software, scanners or fax machines, tools, office furniture, or modifications for an accessible office.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

***How much can I borrow?*** Loan amounts range from \$250 to \$50,000. The loan would be for the exact amount of the item. Can I apply if I have no job? YES. Social Security Disability or Retirement benefits and other sources of income are considered. Can I apply if my credit is poor? YES the reason for the poor credit is considered, as is one's ability to repay the loan. How do I apply? Contact ACCESS to complete the loan application materials in person. Application can be done at the ACCESS office or at a location of your preference.

## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS & SPONSORS

⚡ Loraine Adkins	💰 Charles Bunge	💰 Mary Meunier	💰 Joseph Campbell
⚡ Heather Bowers	💰 Kathy Chenous	💰 Mark & Alicia Meyer	♥ Access Elevator
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Access to Independence greatly appreciates the generosity of all those who have made a financial contribution – big or small – to our organization. Through the generosity of our donors, ACCESS is able to expand opportunities for individuals with disabilities to access demonstrations and free loans of assistive technology equipment, skills training in peoples' homes and classes at our office in Madison, among the wide array of services we provide. We would like to thank each of our sponsors for their generosity!

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## **ACCESS to Independence**

3810 Milwaukee St.  
Madison, WI 53714  
608.242.8484 (phone/relay)  
800.362.9877 (toll-free/relay)  
608.242.0383 (fax)

info@accesstoind.org  
**www.accesstoind.org**

## **ACCESS Board Members**

Teresa Grenawalt	Keith Wanta
Mary Meunier	Karen Baker
David Rosenthal	Georgia Allen
Joanna Storm	Malachy Bishop

ACCESS is seeking new board members.  
Contact us if you'd like to know more.

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*And people  
like YOU!*

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