

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION: Disability Awareness Month 2018

Whereas: The disability experience is a natural part of life and is valued as a part of our rich diversity.

Whereas: Disability is a social construct. The 'problem' is not the medical condition that resides within the individual, but the 'problem' is that society does not create welcoming, supporting environments/policies/systems for all.

Whereas: The most effective way to increase awareness is through everyone's openness to learn and acknowledge that there are systemic barriers that reduce the likelihood of those with disabilities enjoying equitable experiences and living independent, productive lives within their communities.

Whereas: Equitable experiences and full inclusion is a matter of social justice. Consequently, creating equitable inclusive environments is a shared responsibility of everyone.

Whereas: Policies must be developed, attitudes shaped, and equitable experiences be offered to all individuals; including those with developmental disabilities.

Whereas: Awareness must be raised that segregated institutions, services, and processes are not only more costly, financially, to our society; but are also more costly to those with disabilities who desire to live independent, productive lives. It is further costly to our communities, because society misses out on the rich talents and experiences those with disabilities have to offer their communities.

Whereas: Citizens should do all in their power to:

- Recognize the value and intersectionality of the disability experience in our lives and the valued role it has in our rich diversity.
- Recognize the barriers presented to those with disabilities.
- Create ways to include everyone; especially those with developmental disabilities, to be fully included in all aspects of life.
- Understand the losses (financial, spiritual, human rights, contributions to community, and otherwise) when our communities segregate and create barriers for those with disabilities.
- Demand policymakers no longer invest in segregation and create inclusive, equitable policies and systems for all.

And,

Now, therefore, I (we), (official making proclamation), do hereby proclaim March 2018 as

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

and galvanize efforts that will lead our communities and policy makers to create real systems change so people with developmental disabilities will enjoy equitable, inclusive lives.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I (we) have hereunto set our hand and caused our seal this _____ day of March, in the year of our Lord, two thousand and seventeen.