

In December of 2024 the Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing held their annual conference with the theme “Putting Unity in CommUNITY based Advocacy for Legislative Change.”

This conference provided Legislative Advocacy training to stakeholders and Community partners through a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Lens. The Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired are seeking to unite, empower, and magnify the Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing message for legislative change as it pertains access to Education, Medical Services (i.e. Mental Health), and D/HH Service Policies. This Community Engagement is in support of the Commission’s ongoing efforts to fulfill their state plan initiatives of Access, Engagement, and Advocacy.

The conference included a 3-track system approach over 2 days of interactive breakout session on Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Speech Impaired Access in: Education, Medical Settings, and D/HH Service Policy. Throughout our conference we offer Continuing Education Units (CEU’s), RID, CRCC, ACHE, MFT/CPC, BESW. We had over 150 participants in the conference over the two days.

Participants were able to choose from the following topics: Disabilities Assistive Technology Program (K-12), Early Intervention Resources, Deaf Mentor Support, & Advocacy, D/HH Education Needs & National Standard Practices, and Education Bill Draft Request (BDR) Concepts Workshop – Uniting the Message in our Education Track.

In the Medical track they could choose from: Mental Health Advocacy & Self Care, Medical Hospitality & advocacy, Health and Wellness in Advocacy and Medical BDR Concepts Workshop – Uniting the Message.

In the Policy track they could choose from: Nevada Electronic Legislative Information Systems (NELIS)- What is NELIS? Effective Communication Explained & Understanding/Applying ADA, Bill draft Request & Legislative Advocacy *Special Legislative Guest(s), D/HH Services & Accessibility BDR Concepts Workshop – Q & A.

We had 25 exhibitors’ booths available during the conference, including state agencies, service providers, stakeholders and sponsors such as ADARA.

We had several Keynote Speakers including, Darrin R Smith, MPA, Shane Feldman, CEO of Innivee Strategies, and Amanda Tuite, Co-Founder & CEO of Access Vine. Along with special guest Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May who led one of the sessions for us about Bill Draft Requests & Legislative Advocacy.

Everyone who attended the conference had a good time and felt they came away with a better understanding of the legislative process.



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