



# Center for People With Disabilities 2017 Annual Report



Overcoming Barriers to Independent Living since 1977



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# OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

As a new Executive Director, I deeply appreciate the individuals, partners and supporters who have helped us stay strong in our core principles and values. Over our 40-year history, CPWD has been committed to empowering people with disabilities to achieve and maintain independence. I am proud to say that many of the people with disabilities we connect with go on to bring peer support for others and become powerful models of independent living in our community.

Since our inception in 1977, we have grown to meet the needs of our community, and currently offer a comprehensive set of programs. All of our programs are rooted in independent living philosophy, which champions consumers as the ones to identify their needs, set goals, develop strategies, and achieve their objectives, with the assistance of our staff and programs. Much of the strength of our programs and organization lies in the fact that more than 70 percent of our board and staff are also people with disabilities.

Over the past year, we continued to build our programming in response to community needs. We added a full-time Community Organizer, Anna, who has done a fantastic job at increasing consumer engagement with the local officials and policymakers.

We launched the Veterans Independence Program (VIP) that helps veterans at risk of institutionalization to continue to live at home and engage in community life. This program fosters independent living by putting the veteran in control of choosing the services they need, managing the flexible budget allocated by the VA, and hiring and supervising their own workers.

These are just some of the highlights from a successful year. I hope you will enjoy reading about these and other accomplishments in the pages that follow.

Looking forward, we are exploring remodeling our outdated building in Boulder to up-level the work and program environments and increase functionality. We are also transitioning our Home Health records from paper to electronic format with significant support from the Rose Community Foundation.

This year promises to be a productive time of increasing accessibility to services and deepening our roots as a key organization in the communities we serve. We are excited to engage in our work while staying true to our core principles and values. Thank you for your participation and support!



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Maria Stepanyan".

Maria Stepanyan  
Executive Director

# LOCATIONS

## BOULDER

1675 Range Street  
Boulder, CO 80301  
(303) 442-8662

### Hours:

Monday through Thursday, 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM  
Friday, 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

## LONGMONT

615 North Main Street  
Longmont, CO 80501  
(303) 772-3250

### Hours:

Monday - Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM

## NORTH METRO

10317 Washington Street  
Thornton, CO 80229  
(303) 790-1390

### Hours:

Monday through Thursday, 8 AM to 4 PM  
Friday, 8 AM to 12 PM

## BROOMFIELD

26 Garden Center, Suite 1  
Broomfield, CO 80020  
(720) 308-7705

### Hours:

Thursdays Only, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm  
Closed Tuesday through Sunday

[www.cpwd.org](http://www.cpwd.org)

## ACCESSIBILITY NEWS

### ACCIL Luncheon

CPWD and the other 8 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) gathered at the Capitol in Denver last February to observe the legislature in session. Consumers had an opportunity to address house representatives about independence, and bring testimony to the need for State programs that assist people with disabilities.



*Left: consumer Dwayne testifies; right: CPWD staff arrive at Capitol*



### Accessible Pedestrian Signals



People with visual impairment of varying degrees have difficulty seeing stoplights, worn out reflective tape in crosswalks, oncoming traffic, and pedestrian signals.

Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) are devices that communicate instructions about crossing a crosswalk to inform people who cannot see lights and signals.

At the request of CPWD, John Behan, Project Manager, Traffic, City of Thornton, Infrastructure Department, re-taped crosswalks and to began installing APS systems at specific intersections more prevalently used by people with visual impairment. Thank you, John!

## BY THE NUMBERS

Number of people with disabilities served	1,476
Gender	
Male	33 %
Female	67 %
Average Age	67
Total Hours of Service with Consumers	36,029
Home Health Service Hours	17,290
Goals Achieved by Consumers	224
Colorado Counties Served	17
Number of Cities Served	68
Nursing Home Transitions	6

### Who We Serve

People with ALL disabilities, families, schools, employers and other related parties, in the greater Boulder-Denver area

### Where We Work

Throughout the greater Boulder-Denver area



### What We Do

Our Mission is to provide resources, information and advocacy to assist people with disabilities in overcoming barriers to independent living. We achieve this through a series of programs that include 5 Core Services:

1. Information and Referral
2. Independent Living Skills Training
3. Individual and Systems Advocacy
4. Peer Support
5. Transitions (for youth, from nursing home, institutional diversion)



Top - youth in transitions class; bottom - ILP Manager Kia with consumer Leonardo

# PROGRAMS

## Beyond Vision

The Beyond Vision team is highly skilled, trained and knowledgeable in a wide variety of alternative techniques, adaptive devices and assistive technologies both for low vision and blind needs. The team also conducts outreach, community education, and training for caseworkers, long-term care facility workers, civic groups, employers, students and professionals in the field.

Last year we assisted 408 people who have visual impairment or are blind. We increased our support groups, which now total more than 30 each month, and that number continues to grow as we see increased demand and positive impact from the groups. Part of the demand is for more technology training, as well as one-on-one skills training to help people live independently.



*Job-seeking training*



*CPWD Staff and consumers at mobility training*

## Employment Program

Last year, we assisted 113 people in working towards their employment goals. Our Employment Program provides 5 related services for people with disabilities and employers:

1. We offer services to people with any type of disability, who need assistance preparing for job search and finding a job.
2. We are a Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) vendor and work with people referred by DVR to assist job-seekers with disabilities in achieving their employment goals.
3. We are a Ticket to Work Employment Network - Ticket to Work is a free and voluntary program that assists Social Security beneficiaries in finding work and become financially independent, all while retaining Medicare or Medicaid benefits.
4. We provide Benefits Counseling - staff include Community Work Incentives Coordinators (CWICs), who are trained and certified to guide individuals in effectively securing employment without impacting disability and other benefits.
5. We provide Technical Assistance to employers - we dispel the myths of hiring people with disabilities and coach employers on typical accommodations, federal and state incentives, and disability etiquette.

## Independent Living Day Program

Our Independent Living Day Program (ILP) encompasses four of our five Core Services: Self-Advocacy, Peer Mentoring, Independent Living Skills Training, and Information & Referral. ILP's main goal is to assist people with disabilities to live independently. Key elements of the program include Independent Living Skills Classes, Personal Goal Setting, Community Involvement, Independent Living Assistance and Housing Assistance.

Last year, we assisted 24 people in ILP offering independent living skills training to assist people with disabilities in achieving their independent living goals.



*Consumers in the Independent Living Day Program*

## Peer Support

One of the key tenets of Independent Living Philosophy is Peer Support. People with disabilities sharing with other people with disabilities brings a level of inspiration, community, encouragement and strength that cannot be found simply by receiving assistance. Real life solutions for support and self-advocacy, as well as camaraderie and fun are fundamental elements of peer support.

Last year, we provided more than 2,800 hours of peer counseling and support. CPWD has two main peer support groups: one in Boulder and one in Longmont. We also offer Spanish-speaking peer support groups, and more than 30 peer support groups for people with visual impairment.



*Peer Support activities and gathering. Left - Longmont group; right - Boulder group.*

## Transitions

CPWD's Transitions Program addresses 3 key community needs:

1. Transition people with disabilities out of nursing homes and medical institutions back into their own homes. Our transitions services also provide support and training for life skills and developing and maintaining independence. Last year, we transitioned 6 individuals from nursing homes to their own homes.
2. Institutional Diversion - once people with disabilities transition from nursing home to their own home, there is a risk that, if they don't receive the assistive services they need, they could wind up back in a nursing home. CPWD provides follow-up and assistive services - to people we have transitioned and anyone at risk of losing their housing and independence - to ensure that people who have transitioned have the supports and resources they need to remain independent.
3. Youth Transitions - Upon graduation from high school, students with disabilities lose youth disability benefits. CPWD specializes in assisting youth who are transitioning to adulthood through classes that develop interpersonal and vocational skills. Our expert transitions coordinators help students and families plan ahead for this shift, and prepare them for successful transition from high school.



*Left - Maria with consumer Dwayne; middle - Ibrahim, a transitioned consumer; right - veteran with disabilities*

## Veterans Independence Program

CPWD is excited to announce that we have been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to offer our Veterans Independence Program (VIP). VIP is a program funded by the VA and follows the guidelines of the VA's Veteran-Directed Home and Community Based Services (VD- HCBS).

- VIP allows you, as a Veteran, to receive services in your home and community while managing your own service plan and budget, allotted by the VA.
- VIP allows you to hire and train family members as your caregivers.
- VIP helps veterans of all ages who need non-medical supports and services, and assistance with activities of daily living (such as bathing and getting dressed) or important activities (such as fixing meals and taking medicines). VIP also assists family and friends who need support to better support their veterans.
- You, as the veteran, or a representative, manage your flexible budget to pay for goods and services.

## Home Health

CPWD's Home Health department supports the view that all people are entitled to the freedom to make choices and the right to live independently in the community. We provide skilled and unskilled services necessary to maintain independence. Home Health works closely with our Independent Living and Transitions programs to ensure that people participating in transitions or life skills training have the supportive health services they need to achieve and maintain independence.

Last year, our Home Health department provided more than 17,290 hours of skilled and unskilled services to people with disabilities in our community.



*Left - consumer receiving Home Health services; right - CPWD staff and Board member Ben McGuire with Longmont Mayor, Dennis Coombs, who signed a proclamation declaring August 23, 2017 as "Center for People With Disabilities, 40th Anniversary Celebration" day*

## Individual Advocacy

Individual Advocacy informs and educates people with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities. We empower them to self-advocate, learn about their rights, the laws, and how to be assertive in the face of discrimination or even misunderstanding. We support individuals through life events and processes, and help them build the confidence and self-esteem to advocate for themselves.



*Independent Living Advisor Howard works with a consumer.*

## Systems Advocacy

Systems Advocacy works to educate leaders, groups and decision-makers that impact funding, policy and benefits, including Medicaid, housing, and other State-run programs. We also engage in public awareness initiatives such as improving public transportation, accessibility to public places and private business, and access to information and education.

## Success Stories

### Luca

Luca acquired a disability as the result of a spinal cord injury at age 50. During his hospitalization, he lost his house, and from the hospital, went straight to a nursing facility – never to return home.

Luca contacted CPWD in 2016 seeking to transition out of the nursing facility and back into his own home. He worked with CPWD to overcoming obstacles in accessing vouchers, finding affordable and accessible housing, and finding appropriate home health care.



*Getting ready to leave the nursing home*

Finally, after a lot of work and with support, he received a voucher and was afforded the opportunity to move into an affordable housing unit in Louisville with wheelchair accessibility.

In June 2017, 6 years after his accident, he moved into his new home.

During his hospitalization, he also lost his long-time companion, his dog. He has now applied for a service animal and looks forward to the day when he will have a new dog.



*Luca in his new home*

### Vickie



*CPWD makes me realize that my situation doesn't need to define who I am, what I do, or stop my creativity from flowing. With the right support for me and more important for others with total vision loss, and other serious disabilities, the world is full of possibility because of organizations like Beyond Vision and CPWD.*

Vickie was born with a lazy eye, that was left untreated. In 2005, she began experiencing double vision and low vision, lost depth perception, and experienced pain and dizziness.

In 2013 she had surgery, but was left with very low vision and couldn't move around safely. She joined CPWD's Beyond Vision program and has regained her life.

*"Because of CPWD's Beyond Vision program, I have increased my knowledge and understanding about low- or no-vision issues and how people with these disabilities are able to overcome the many obstacles associated with them," said Vickie. "As a person with vision issues associated with neurological damage, I was amazed at the tools available for those of us who find it difficult to read labels, books, and simply get around when our vision is obscured."*

## Key Moments

### Collaborating Around Local Accessibility

In a cooperative gathering, the CPWD and the City of Boulder, Public Works Department's Capital Improvements Team met to provide training and education around accessibility of public walkways. In particular, sidewalks, curbcuts and crosswalks were discussed.



*Taking the chairs for a ride*

Present were Gerrit Slatter, Principal Transportation Engineer at City of Boulder and his team, as well as Lisa Nelson, Director of Core Services at CPWD and her team, which included people with disabilities with mobility and accessibility needs, including a person in a wheelchair, a person with visual impairment, and a person with a disability who cannot drive but uses public transportation.

The first part of the meeting included a discussion of crosswalks, curbcuts and sidewalks, and raising awareness for the Public Works team as they plan new and updating construction projects in the community. Learning about access, type of material (bricks vs concrete, for example), and how to explain the need for curb cuts to neighborhood residents who may be irked by construction or change were some of the items discussed. Real-life experience from people with disabilities in the group greatly informed the Public Works team.



*Walking with glasses that simulate blindness*

### 40th Anniversary - Open Houses



*Diane Groff, Longmont Manager with Mayor Coombs and his wife*

CPWD was proud to celebrate 40 years of service to the disability community last year. To honor four decades and continue to share our mission, we held open houses at each of our locations. Attendees included consumers, families, current and past Board members and founders, business owners, and local and Colorado public officials. It was a time of sharing, remembering, and looking to the future of CPWD and independent living in our community.



*Group shot of staff, Board members and visitors at the open house*

### Regional Employment Event

CPWD hosted an Employment Event for people with disabilities featuring speakers who were employers of people with disabilities, employees with disabilities, representatives from Division



*The Employment Event panel and team*

of Vocational Rehabilitation and Ticket to Work, and accessibility experts. More than 100 people from schools, businesses and the public attended to learn about job-seeking with a disability and all about hiring people with disabilities.



*A powerful presentation*

# LEADERSHIP

## CPWD Board of Directors

The Board of Directors meets 11 times a year at the CPWD office at 1675 Range Street in Boulder; the November/December meeting is combined. Public input welcome. Contact: CPWD.Board@gmail.com  
Officers are elected annually to a one-year term, with the option to be re-elected.



Tony Adams  
Board President  
Financial Consultant



Deborah Conley  
Board Secretary  
Researcher



Nancy Phares  
Board Vice President  
Retired Professional  
Research Assistant



Ruth Arnold  
Board Treasurer  
CEO, Colorado Recovery



Dale Gaar  
Board Member  
Attorney



Ben McGuire  
Board Member  
Entrepreneur, Investor,  
Mentor



Jason Konzak  
Board Member  
IT Consultant



Geoffrey Doctoroff  
Board Member  
Risk Management Professional,  
Certified ADA Coordinator

More than 70 % of our Board members are persons with disabilities

## CPWD Executive Team



Maria Stepanyan  
Executive Director



Lisa Nelson  
Director of Core Services



Chris O'Brien  
Director of Development  
and Communications



Jan McIntosh  
Home Health Administrator



Margaret Catterall  
Finance Manager



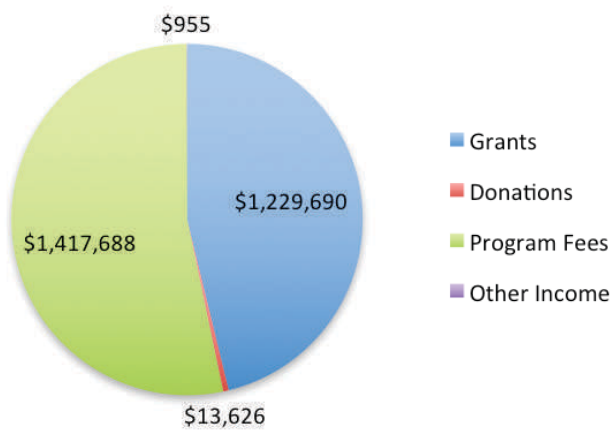
Patrick Miller  
Program Manager

More than 70 % of our staff are persons with disabilities

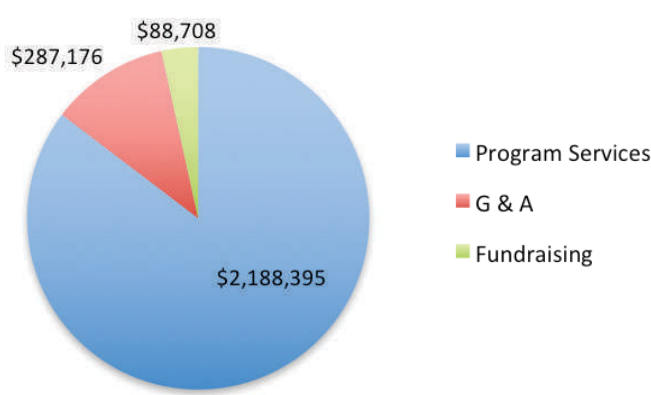
# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

This past year, CPWD raised \$2,661,959 in grants, fees and donations. For a complete copy of our audited financial statements, please contact [chris@cpwd.org](mailto:chris@cpwd.org), or visit our website.

## Income



## Expenses



## Thank you to the following funders:

Anschutz Family Foundation  
Boulder County  
Broomfield Community Foundation  
Broomfield Health and Human Services  
City of Boulder  
City of Longmont  
Longmont Cultural Event Committee  
Bump in the Road Foundation  
Department of Health and Human Services

The Hynd Foundation  
Lynn and Helen Clark Fund  
Rose Community Foundation  
Thornton Assistance Fund  
Boulder Community Foundation  
City of Westminster  
Jefferson County via Community First Foundation  
State of Colorado,  
Office of Independent Living Services

Many thanks to all of our financial supporters! We are deeply appreciative of your kindness and generosity. Every donation, no matter how small, helps us continue our work. Thank you!  
Thank you to the Community First Foundation for hosting Colorado Gives day and to all of you who made a gift last year!

Many thanks to our volunteers who provide so much help and support, including:  
**Thank You!**

- Day of Caring
- Community Services
- Individual Volunteers



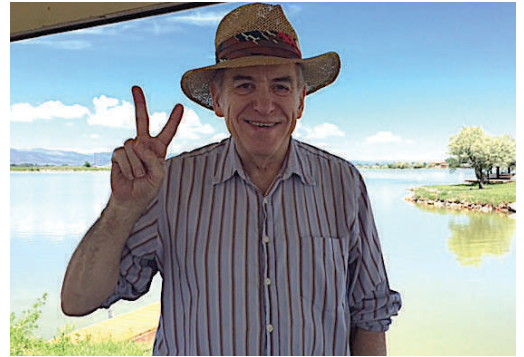
ROTC Volunteers helping with the grounds at CPWD

# HOW TO GET INVOLVED

CPWD is a Center for Independent Living that provides support and services to all people with disabilities to help them live independently and to their fullest potential. We welcome your support and involvement.

Financial contributors play a major role in enabling us to offer assistance at no cost to consumers, ensuring that critical services in our community remain accessible to all.

We also welcome volunteers to help us with gatherings, office tasks, transportation, and many other jobs and projects.



*ILP consumer Roy*



*Diane at Longmont Festival on Main*

And, even if you are unable to give, we invite you to get involved. Supporting people with disabilities is most importantly about building integrated communities. We welcome everyone to join us in learning about and sharing ways to support integration and help our community flourish.

We invite everyone and anyone to come visit us; find out what is happening with disability culture in your community. We welcome all and are excited to share with you our goals, programs and services. We would love to find out what you are passionate about and look for

ways for you to connect with our mission to provide resources, information and advocacy to assist people with disabilities in overcoming barriers to independent living.



*ILP consumer Debra*



*Peer Group consumer Ed*

Perhaps you will become a volunteer, perhaps an advocate. Maybe you will become a resource to a friend or family member with an acquired disability. Maybe you will make a new friend for life here.

Together, we can find the most effective, inclusive and compassionate ways to build an integrated community where we live. We can be proud and supportive of every member of our community.

Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness.  
Your gift helps us help others.

To make a gift, please contact us:

1675 Range Street  
Boulder, CO 80301  
(303) 442-8662  
chris@cpwd.org

Or visit our website to make a donation:

[www.cpwd.org](http://www.cpwd.org)

**THANK YOU!**

## About CPWD

The Center for People With Disabilities (CPWD) is a cross-disability, non-residential, nonprofit agency that provides unique services to people with disabilities. Founded in 1977 by Judy Dixon and former Boulder County Commissioner, Homer Page, CPWD's first focus was to help people with disabilities gain employment. Today, CPWD offers a comprehensive set of programs and services to meet the needs of people with disabilities.



*ILP consumers Fred, Danny and Roy*

The move to end discrimination against people with disabilities and cultivate support for civil rights and services started in the late 1960s in tandem with the civil rights movement. Prior to that time, people with disabilities faced many barriers including: access to physical location, healthcare, education, training and other needs. Jobs were unavailable and access to transportation, public and private buildings and basic services were extremely limited.

Over the ensuing years, protests over access and rights have continued to draw attention to the discrimination of people with disabilities in the workforce and society. It wasn't until 1990 that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law.

Today, CPWD helps people with disabilities gain access to crucial and otherwise unavailable services that assist them in overcoming barriers and challenges to independent living, gainful employment and fulfilling lives. Without support and independence, many people with disabilities are at risk of isolation, depression and other physical and mental challenges, including institutionalization.

CPWD's goal is an integrated community that equally welcomes all members. People with disabilities are a powerful and significant part of our community. CPWD exists so that people with disabilities may live independently. We believe that there is nothing more disabling than pity.

## Core Services

As a Center for Independent Living, CPWD provides five Core Services to people with disabilities. Core Services are embedded in all of our programs, mission and vision.

- 1. Independent Living Skills Training:** Provides support, instruction and assistance to teach everyday skills needed for independence. This includes connecting consumers with other, specialized services providers when needed.
- 2. Advocacy:** Individual advocacy assists people in receiving benefits and teaches self-advocating for individual rights and responsibilities. Systems advocacy seeks to change local, state and federal policies that impact the lives of people with disabilities.
- 3. Peer Support:** Groups and outreach connect people with disabilities to create community, inspiration, bring courage and encouragement through peer connect and role modeling.
- 4. Information & Referral:** Provides information about rights, services, equipment, accessibility, and other disability related topics to anyone, whether they have a disability or not, including referrals to additional services.
- 5. Transitions:** Assists people to transition from nursing homes back into their own home and community. Includes options to divert people from going into institutions through Life Skills Training and other independence alternatives, and supports youth transitioning to adulthood.



*American flag, disability style*



Thank you to our consumers and all those who support independent living. Your courage and commitment is powerful and gives us the inspiration to carry our mission forward!

