

April 2020

Advocacy in Action:

The Advocacy Committee met on March 17th via conference call. With the State Legislation closed for the time being our trip to Sacramento has been postponed. Sarah Verity had set up four meetings with State Legislators prior to the reality of the pandemic so it is good to know that there is interest in hearing our messages. Sarah will reschedule when the time is right. For right now we will concentrate our efforts in letter writing.

Before we were asked to “Shelter in Place” the month of March was designated as **Development Disabilities Awareness Month** with the program: [#WorkWithMe4ADay](#). This was a collaborative statewide initiative of the Alliance Supporting People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).

On March 6th, Assemblymember Kevin Mullin spent the day working alongside Mitzi Zwierlein, Gatepath’s 2019 Neal Poppin Award winner. Mitzi has been receiving job coaching support from Gatepath for 42 years and she works at McDonalds. She is a wonderful example of an individual who is thriving at home and in the workplace with the support she receives from Gatepath. Mitzi is the daughter of Auxiliary member Barbara Zwierlein. Kevin and Mitzi can be viewed on a short video on this special day at <https://youtube/eTE27EhjbU4>. This newsletter is not capable of being a link to this address so enter it into your computer.

IDD (Intellectual and Development Disabilities) services are underfunded by \$1.4 billion causing program closures, housing shortages, waitlists for services and challenges in hiring and retaining support staff. With the new reality that our State and neighborhoods are shut down due to the virus it is all the more important that we press forward with the needs of those who are in our Mission. This is why we ADVOCATE.

Cathy Nessier