

SPEAK UP AND SPEAK OUT

summit

Funded by the Illinois Council on
Developmental Disabilities

September 1 - 3, 2025 Summit Registration

20 Years of Speaking Up and Speaking Out!

Please read this carefully.

**This year's SUSO Summit will be HYBRID
We have room for 300 people in person, the rest
VIRTUALLY, using Zoom**

\$50 Summit Registration fee is required for all attendees, including personal support workers. Financial assistance for registration fee is available. (Please see Form 3.)

To Attend SUSO in Bloomington-Normal, IL:

- Submit Registration Form and \$50 payment, or complete the Financial Assistance Request (Form 3).
- Do not reserve a hotel room or book transportation until you receive a confirmation phone call.
- T-Shirts will be given during check-in.
- **Groups from one agency have a limit of 20 total individuals to attend in-person, including support staff.**

To Attend SUSO Virtually:

- Submit Registration Form and \$50 payment, or complete the Financial Assistance Request (Form 3). **There is a limit of 25 individuals from one agency to apply for a stipend.** Please reach out if you have a larger group wanting to attend.
- **T-SHIRT DEADLINE:** In order to mail your t-shirt in time for SUSO, please register by **July 25, 2025**. After this date, we cannot guarantee you will receive your t-shirt by SUSO. T-Shirts will be mailed to the address on your registration.
- Make sure correct email address is listed on your registration form to receive the Zoom link.

Attending this event gives permission for your photo or video to be in brochures, websites, etc. If you do not want your picture taken and published, please contact Becca Schroeder at 815-464-1832 extension 1018.

For more information about the Summit, call 815-464-1832 or e-mail kim@thearcofil.org

Monday, September 1, 2025 - AGENDA

4:00 - 6:00 pm	IN PERSON ONLY: Check in at registration table; dinner is on your own
4:00 - 7:00 pm	IN PERSON ONLY: Reception Enjoy some light snacks and meet with other SUSO attendees.

Tuesday, September 2, 2025 - AGENDA

8:00 am	IN PERSON ONLY: Check in at registration table and visit with exhibitors Continental Breakfast		
9:00 - 9:15 am	ALL: Welcome and Housekeeping Kimberly Mercer-Schleider, Director, Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities		
9:15 - 9:20 am	ALL: Welcome Samantha Alloway, Executive Director, The Arc of Illinois		
9:20 - 10:00 am	ALL: General Session: Shirley Pacey and Barbara Pritchard "20 Years of Speaking Up and Speaking Out" Hear from those who attended SUSO from the beginning. Learn how the Speak Out and Speak Up Summit started and how you can continue the legacy. Bring YOUR memories of past Summit's to share!		
10:00 - 10:15 am	Break		
10:15 - 11:15 am	ALL: Keynote: "Joyful Grit: Turning Setbacks into Setups" presented by Zach Anner In his heartfelt and often hilarious talk, comedian, author, and television writer Zach Anner shares lessons in resilience from his extraordinary, but altogether unexpected, life. How did a kid born with cerebral palsy who dropped out of high school wind up impressing Oprah so much she gave him his own TV show? It's a journey that involves climbing up mountains, surfing down volcanoes, questing for bagels in subzero weather, and celebrating the people who make even the steepest uphill battles feel like part of the fun. For Zach, true success comes when you're able to seize not just your moments, but your mistakes, and do it all with a sense of humor, purpose, and a healthy dose of joyful grit.		
11:15 - 11:30 am	Break		
11:30 am - 12:15 pm	ALL: #1 Breakout Session Mary Mathis, Tia Nelis, Linda Sandman "Self-Advocates and Sexuality: We Have Rights!" Sexual self-advocacy involves making choices, respecting yourself and others, and communicating about what you want and need. This workgroup will be interactive where you can use your self-advocacy skills to talk about healthy relationships and speak up for your rights about sexuality.	IN PERSON ONLY: #2 Breakout Session Rachel Costabile, Erika Kissel, Ashley McLeod, Ruth Pligge, Emily Ramming - Just a Dollop "Dream. Design. Do. Turning talents into opportunities through customized work and self employment." Learn about opportunities in Illinois for creative ways to use existing resources for employment!	IN PERSON ONLY: #3 Breakout Session Speak Out and Open Mic Prep What do you want to say at the Speak Out? Whether it is your first time or your 20th time, we can help you figure out what you want to say and help you practice.
Breakout Sessions All Sessions will be recorded and shared			
12:15 - 2:00 pm	Lunch and Open Mic		

Tuesday, September 2, 2025 - AGENDA Continued

2:15 - 3:00 pm Breakout Sessions All Sessions will be recorded and shared	ALL: #4 Breakout Session Blue Tower Solutions "Say What?! How to Check if Something You Hear is True" Using role plays and audience participation, we will learn how to figure out if something you are hearing is true, false, or somewhere in between!	IN PERSON ONLY: #5 Breakout Session Sebastian Aragon, Cheryl Jansen, Ashley McLeod, Da Wen Mei "Register. Educate. Vote. Use Your Power!" This engaging interactive session builds confidence and knowledge around voter registration and voting by breaking down the what, why, who, when, where, and how of voting into clear, accessible information. Through real-life examples, visuals, and supportive resources, everyone is included and informed. The session uplifts the message and importance that people with disabilities have the right to vote and be heard.	IN PERSON ONLY: #6 Breakout Session Jae Jin Pak and Timotheus "T.J" Gordon "Advocacy Across Cultures and Races: The Story of Chicagoland DPOCC" Attendees will hear the story of Chicagoland Disabled People of Color Coalition, our mission, our impact, and our work. We will share that seeing, hearing and including BIPOC disabled individuals adds to our creativity and advocacy, and strengthens our disability community. We will share tips and ideas on how to connect with the diverse communities in your local community.
3:00 - 3:30 pm	Break		
3:30 - 4:30 pm	ALL: Regional Meetings Bring your BIG ideas as you work together in your regions to choose one thing you can advocate for after the Summit!		
5:00 - 7:00 pm	IN PERSON ONLY: Dinner		
7:00 - 10:00 pm	IN PERSON ONLY: Costume Ball Dress in Costume! Dress Super Fancy! Come as You Are! Anything goes at the Biggest Dance of the Year!		

Wednesday, September 3, 2025 - AGENDA

8:00 - 9:00 am	IN PERSON ONLY: Continental Breakfast and visit with exhibitors		
9:00 - 10:00 am	ALL: Legislative Panel Hear from the people in Springfield who work to make laws so people with disabilities in Illinois have better lives.		
10:00 - 10:30 am	Break Check out of rooms - hold luggage with registration		
10:30 - 11:30 am	ALL: Keynote: Self-Advocate Panel - Cindy Benton, self-advocate and Executive Director of People First Wisconsin and Ashley Mathey, a member of People First Wisconsin, Tia Nelis, TASH Cindy Benton, Executive Director of People First Wisconsin and Ashley Mathey, a member of People First Wisconsin, will share how they get things done in Wisconsin and to make sure that everyone is included in conversations. Tia Nelis, Director of Policy and Advocacy for TASH, will share just some of the things she does across the globe to improve the lives of other people with disabilities.		
11:30 - 11:45 am	Break		
11:45 am - 12:15 pm	ALL: Advocating for Respect and Inclusion: The Impact of "Spread the Word" with Special Olympics Illinois Join Special Olympics Illinois for a conversation on how individuals and communities can advocate for inclusion and respect for people with intellectual disabilities. This session will explore the ongoing work of the global "Spread the Word" campaign, which challenges the use of the R-word and promotes acceptance through education and action. Attendees will hear perspectives from organizational leadership and a Special Olympics Illinois athlete on why this movement matters—and how we can all play a part in building a more inclusive world.		
12:15 pm	Boxed Lunch Hang out a little longer or take it to go!		

Summit Registration - Form 1

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Attending: ☐ In-Person ☐ Virtually

Agency or Affiliate: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ 9 digit Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Where are you in the state? ☐ North ☐ South ☐ Central ☐ Chicago

Email (required to receive Zoom link): _____

Circle or Check T-Shirt Size: ☐ Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large
☐ X-Large ☐ 2X ☐ 3X ☐ 4X ☐ 5X ☐ Other: _____

Will you be attending with a support person or PSW? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please provide their name, contact information and T-Shirt size below:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Agency or Affiliate: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ 9 digit Zip: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Circle or Check T-Shirt Size: ☐ Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large
☐ X-Large ☐ 2X ☐ 3X ☐ 4X ☐ 5X ☐ Other: _____

For virtual attendees:

Your address is where the t-shirt will be shipped unless otherwise noted.

If we can send a group of shirts to one location, please let us know.

Accommodation Request - Form 2

We would like to accommodate as many individuals as possible during the 2025 Speak Up Speak Out Summit. **Please note that you are not limited to the items listed below. The deadline for all accommodation submissions is August 8, 2025. If you have questions or would like to speak with someone about your accommodation requests, you can call Becca at 815-464-1832 extension 1018 or email at becca@thearcofil.org.**

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Check all that apply:

Do you need a sign language interpreter? ☐ Or ☐ Captioning/CART

Do you need captioning in another language? If yes, what language? _____

Do you need Braille? ☐ Large Print ☐ Other ☐ _____

In person Only:

Do you need a Hoyer Lift? ☐

Please list any dietary restrictions: _____

Assistive Listening Device? ☐ Shower Chair? ☐

Do you need a Nurse to give you medication? ☐

Will you need help from a PSW during the regular hours of the conference? ☐

PSWs will be onsite and available during the regular hours of the conference ONLY.

Will you need an accessible room? ☐ If you do, please call Becca at 815-464-1832.

Your PSW/Staff emergency (24 hour) phone number: _____

(This is important for questions on medication or other support needs.)

If you have checked any of the above, please list your specific need and provide a detailed explanation below. If you need medication administered by an RN, please provide the a copy of the current MAR (medical administration record). If you need more room, use the back of this page or separate sheet.

Registration Fee

\$50 Summit Registration fee is required for all attendees, including personal support workers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Becca Schroeder, 815.464.1832 x1018, becca@thearcofil.org.

Hotel and Travel Information

SUSO will be at the Marriott Hotel in Bloomington-Normal, IL.

Marriott Hotel
201 Broadway
Normal, IL 61761

Do not reserve a hotel room or book transportation until you receive a registration confirmation.

The single and double hotel rate is \$192.33 including tax per night. Double rooms are two queen beds and a single room is one king bed and one queen size pull out sofa sleeper. If you are applying for a stipend to help cover the cost of the hotel, do not make reservations. The Arc of Illinois will book your rooms and share any accommodation requests with the hotel.

There are a limited number of accessible rooms. **If you need an accessible room, please contact Becca Schroeder directly at 815.464.1832 or becca@thearcofil.org.**

If you need driving directions to the Marriott Hotel please go to Google Maps or you can call 815.464.1832 for assistance.

There is an Amtrak Train Station across the street from the hotel. To make a train reservation, call Amtrak at 1.800.872.7245.

A parking garage is attached to the hotel. The height clearance is 7 feet, 7 inches on the ground floor, and 7 feet for all other floors. Contact Becca if your vehicle will not fit in the garage.

Parking is an added expense, please mark if needed on your registration form.

Financial Assistance

If financial restrictions prevent you from paying your registration fee, please complete the information below to apply for a Summit Stipend, funded through the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities and administered by The Arc of Illinois. **Send both the registration (Form 1) and the Financial Assistance (Form 3) to The Arc of Illinois Attn: Becca Schroeder, 7550 183rd Street, Tinley Park, IL 60477 or fax to 815-464-5292 or email to becca@thearcofil.org. Questions, call 815-464-1832.**

Who can apply?

Illinois residents who are:

- A person with a developmental disability;
- A parent of a person with a developmental disability;
- An immediate family member of a person with a developmental disability; or
- A guardian/foster parent of a person with a developmental disability.

How much can I apply for?

**\$150 per Person Maximum
\$350 per Family Maximum**

This stipend is intended to assist you with the costs associated with the Summit and **is not intended to cover all the costs**. A portion of the cost is the responsibility of the participant.

Hotel and Financial Assistance Request - Form 3

Hotel Information for In Person Only:

Are you staying at the hotel? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, who will be your Hotel Roommate: _____

Check In Date: ☐ Monday, September 1st ☐ Tuesday, September 2nd

Are you applying for the stipend to help cover the cost of your hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No

I will be driving and need parking: ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what is the size of your vehicle? _____

Fill in the blanks that apply:

I am a person with a developmental disability. Name: _____

My disability is: _____

My family member (**circle one: son, daughter, other**) is a person with a developmental disability.

Family Member Name: _____

Their disability is: _____

Enter amount of financial assistance needed for:

There is a limit of 30 individuals attending virtually from one agency to apply for a stipend.
\$150 for individuals, \$350 for families.

Registration \$ _____
Hotel \$ _____
Transportation \$ _____
PA Registration \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Example: Individual attending and sharing a room with another attendee.

Registration \$ 50
Hotel \$ 96.16
Transportation \$ _____
PA Registration \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ 146.16

This stipend is intended to assist you with the costs associated with the Summit and is not intended to cover all the costs. **A portion of the cost is your responsibility.** When your request for assistance is approved, the stipend registration cost will be directly paid to The Arc of Illinois and the stipend share of the hotel cost will be directly paid to the Hotel. **When your stipend request for a hotel room is approved, The Arc of Illinois will book your hotel room.**

The following statement must be signed to validate this request: I am requesting assistance from The Arc of Illinois, through funding from the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities, to attend this Summit that I would be unable to attend without this support. I promise to use the funds for the stated purposes.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

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7550 183rd Street
Tinley Park, IL 60477

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20 Years of
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and
Speaking
Out!

Be a part of the buzz at
[#SUSO2025](https://twitter.com/SUSO2025)



In order to receive your
t-shirt, we must have your
registration form by July 25,
2025 and remember to have
your size on the form!



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