Voices and Choices Conference
May 30-31, 2013

Artwork by Advocates in Action
Rhode Island’s Statewide Self-Advocacy Organization
Register for Voices & Choices in Conference Center
3:00 - 6:00 pm

Pick up Hotel Room Keys at registration in Conference Center
3:00 - 6:00 pm

Mosaic Art Project in Exhibition Hall
4:00 - 5:00 pm

Scrap Booking Art Project in Exhibition Hall
4:00 - 6:00 pm

African Dance and Drumming in Diamond Ballroom
4:00 - 5:00 pm or 5:00 - 6:00 pm

Talent Show in Amphitheater
4:30 - 6:00 pm

Dinner in Emerald Ballroom
6:30 - 7:30 pm

Guest Speakers:
Tia Nelis
Representative Martha Heath
7:30 pm

Dance in Emerald Ballroom
8:00 - 11:00 pm
Thursday Afternoon

Diamond Ballroom

“Simunye” a Zulu Word for “We Are One”

Two sessions ~ 4:00 & 5:00

This workshop is inspired by the African tradition of villages creating rhythms and sharing with each other. We will use African drums, percussion instruments, hands clapping, feet stomping, and voices calling. The rhythm and movement of the group will build together in the workshop. Groups will be divided into different “villages”. The villages will have the task of developing rhythm with drums, the body, and voices. We will come together to form one village. And that's what Simunye means!

Exhibition Hall

Scrapbooking Workshop

4:00 to 6:00


Amphitheater

MOSAIC Art Project

Bringing the Pieces Together

Exhibition Hall

4:00 to 5:00

Grab Your 3 Minutes of Fame!

Much like all of us at the conference, a mosaic brings together different pieces, all unique and individual, and creates one whole beautiful picture. Every piece plays an important part, adding to its beauty and strength just as every one of you adds to the beauty and strength of the advocacy movement.

Voices and Choices Conference

Page 3
Breakfast for Hotel Guests in Exhibition Hall 7:00 - 8:00 am

Register for Voices & Choices in Conference Center 8:30 - 9:30 am

Keynote: Tia Nelis 9:30 - 10:30 am

Morning Workshops 10:45 - 12:00 am

Lunch in Exhibition Hall 12:00 - 12:30 pm

☆ GMSA 2013 Slide Show 12:30 - 1:00 pm
☆ Theresa Wood Citizenship Award
☆ Local Group Annual Awards

“Simunye” a Zulu Word for “We Are One” 1:00 - 1:30 pm

African Rhythm and Movement

Afternoon Workshops 1:45 - 3:00 pm

Get Home Safe...Thanks for Coming! 3:00 pm
Tia Nelis has been active in state and national self-advocacy for many years. She started People First of Illinois and the national organization, Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE). Tia served as president of both groups. She was co-director of the National Center for Voting and Cognitive Access. Tia is a well known speaker, trainer, and consultant on self-advocacy. She has wide experience in advocating for progressive polices with legislators and public officials. Tia currently works at the University of Illinois in Chicago and as a Self-Advocacy Specialist. She has led projects on aging with developmental disabilities, self determination, and leadership.

“Many years ago most of my existence was spent behind the institutional walls of Brandon Training School. I am free of those walls now but attitudinal walls are still very much placing large, enveloped by ignorance, jackets of segregation around the lives of people with disabilities and especially, those that don’t speak. All of us self-advocates must make waves of change pour over malls and places of leaders of government, moving mountains and clearing paths of acceptance.”

_Tia Nelis_  
Chicago, Illinois

This Conference is Dedicated to the Survivors of Brandon Training School

2013 is the 20th anniversary of the closing of Brandon Training School. A display called Remember Brandon is set up in the Carleton Board Room upstairs. You can look at old photos and watch a video. There will be people there to answer questions and provide support.
How To Date Like Pro: Moving from Friend to Girl/Boyfriend

Are you interested in finding a date? Is there someone you want to ask out? Dating and becoming someone’s girlfriend or boyfriend can be very exciting and challenging. In this workshop, we will discuss how to move from just being friends to becoming a couple. We will cover topics like letting someone know you are interested, asking someone out, what if they say "yes", and what if they say "no". Join us for an honest discussion on how to date like a pro.

KATHERINE MCLAUGHLIN

Keys to Opportunity Through Mentoring

Tracy Thresher, a well-known and respected self-advocate, will share his experiences mentoring students to learn about and become strong self-advocates. Kyle Moriarty, a recent Montpelier High School graduate, and Maleia Darling a student at Spaulding High School will join Tracy and share their learning experiences. They will each present a power point and then the audience will be invited to ask questions.

TRACY THRESHER, KYLE MORIZARTY AND MAELIA DARLING

Speak Up! Speaks Out: How We Made Our Film

First we will show you our 18-minute video we made about how to be a self-advocate called Speak Up Speaks Out. We will talk about how we live independently in our community.

CRAIG DAVIS, CHUCK DENIS, MICHAEL KILBRETH, BETH DAVIS
MARY LAFOUNTAIN, ABBY LAFRAMBOISE & SAMANTHA PARIZO

How To Date Like Pro: Moving from Friend to Girl/Boyfriend

Are you interested in finding a date? Is there someone you want to ask out? Dating and becoming someone's girlfriend or boyfriend can be very exciting and challenging. In this workshop, we will discuss how to move from just being friends to becoming a couple. We will cover topics like letting someone know you are interested, asking someone out, what if they say "yes", and what if they say "no". Join us for an honest discussion on how to date like a pro.

KATHERINE MCLAUGHLIN

Good Old Fashion Speaking Up for Yourself!

Can You Really? Yes, I can! Tia Nelis and Topper will work with folks to do lots of role playing on speaking up. Practice acting self-confident and believing in yourself. It is your life! Make sure you are in the driver’s seat and not just a passenger along for the ride.

TIA NELIS AND KAREN TOPPER

Self-Advocacy Improv

Join us for some fun improvisation and theater games. Try your hand at acting out scenes and roles from everyday activities and participate in fun and interactive theater games. Learn how to play the part of a confident and person who is a strong self-advocate!

ELIZABETH WILCOX, MAISIE LEJEUNESSE, FELICITY GARR, FRANKIE KELLY, ELIZABETH RITZO, DJ FREGEAU, EDWARD BURKE
### Friday Morning Workshops

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<td>Disability Awareness Workshops for Schools</td>
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<td>How To Speak Respectfully in Stressful Situations</td>
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<td><strong>RACHEL MACMARTIN, SHAWN GORTON AND WENDY CAPOBIANO</strong></td>
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<td>The Joys and Challenges of Self-Directed Services</td>
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<td><strong>MAX BARROWS, NICOLE LEBLANC AND KAREN NOONE</strong></td>
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<td>VSA Vermont’s I Am In Here A Movie By Mark Utter</td>
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<td><strong>MARK UTTER AND EMILY ANDERSEN</strong></td>
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**Catching the Employment Bug:**
Finding Your Career Path

Tired of the same old job? Not able to find a job you really want to do? Choosing your career path can be a tough decision. Presenters will outline options for career exploration including internships. Students from Think College Vermont will share their experiences in vocational internships as they follow their career paths.

**BRYAN DAGUE, STIRLING PEEBLES & NICOLE VILLEMAIRE**

**Disability Awareness Workshops for Schools**

“Don’t assume we don’t know anything because we have a disability. Treat us the same as everyone else. We are not as different as you think.” Self-advocates from Rutland go into schools and teach students that names like “retard” and “dummy” are very hurtful. This workshop is a fun way to raise awareness in schools about how to treat people with disabilities with respect.

**PAM BROWN, TAMMY LETHRIDGE, LISA LYNCH & AMANDA SENECAL**

**How To Speak Respectfully in Stressful Situations**

Participants will learn strategies for how to stay respectful when meeting to discuss your ISA. However the hope is that participants will understand these tips can be applied to other situations as well.

**RACHEL MACMARTIN, SHAWN GORTON AND WENDY CAPOBIANO**

**The Joys and Challenges of Self-Directed Services**

This workshop will explore the pro’s and con’s of managing your own support staff. We will emphasize how to supervise, train, communicate with and give feedback to your team. We will give tips from our personal experience to guide you through those challenging situations that you may encounter so that your experience of self-managing your staff will be a rewarding one.

**MAX BARROWS, NICOLE LEBLANC AND KAREN NOONE**

**VSA Vermont’s I Am In Here A Movie By Mark Utter**

Participants will see the movie *I am in Here* and have an opportunity to ask questions of screenwriter and inspirational speaker, Mark Utter. The goal is for people to learn that we all can achieve our goals.

**MARK UTTER AND EMILY ANDERSEN**
### Friday Afternoon Workshops

**1. VSA Vermont’s I Am In Here**
A Movie By Mark Utter  
Amphitheater  
Participants will see the movie *I am in Here* and have an opportunity to ask questions of screenwriter and inspirational speaker, Mark Utter. The goal is for people to learn that we all can achieve our goals.  

**Mark Utter and Emily Andersen**

**2. Keys to Opportunity Through Mentoring**  
Diamond Two  
Tracy Thresher, a well-known and respected self-advocate, will share his experiences mentoring students to learn about and become strong self-advocates. Kyle Moriarty, a recent Montpelier High School graduate, and Maleia Darling a student at Spaulding High School will join Tracy and share their learning experiences. They will each present a power point and then the audience will be invited to ask questions.  

**Tracy Thresher, Kyle Moriarty and Maleia Darling**

**3. Sex and Relationships: How do I figure this out?**  
Diamond One  
When a person is in a sexual relationship, there are many questions people have and also need to think about. In this workshop we discuss what is a sexual romantic relationship, what are the ways people can be sexual with another person, reasons people decide to be sexual or not, which sexual acts can be risky, and what is comfortable to you. We will also explore what makes a positive sexual and romantic relationship.  

**Katherine McLaughlin and Tia Nelis**

**4. SUCCESS in Telling Your Story**  
Emerald One  
We will teach you how to tell your personal stories. We believe that a well-told story is the best way to connect with others, advocate for what you want, relieve stress and change lives. We will use group activities to practice talking about who we are, what we need, and what we want. You may have a chance to tell you story to the group.  

**Nicole LeBlanc and Karen Topper**

**5. Look Through Our Eyes**  
Emerald Two  
The words, attitudes and actions of others impact our lives more than our disabilities. See how self-advocates in Vermont are teaching others to “Look Through Our Eyes.” We will demonstrate activities we do with support workers, college students, bus drivers and more. Learn how you can do this training in your community.  

**Lori Cyr, Deb Demars, Roger Adams, Max Barrows, Samantha Dodge, Patti Mack, Marilyn Shank**
Friday Afternoon Workshops

Do You Have Your Dream Job? How Does It Feel?  Emerald Three

Join us to learn how having your dream job can be like a roller coaster of emotions for people with disabilities. Presenters will describe how to handle the pressures and excitement of working the job of your dreams! People will share tips on the supports they use that work.

RANDY LIZOTTE, JAMES WILLIAMS, NICOLE VILLEMAIRE, JANA WEBER, STACEY SYEADY, NANCY TAYLOR, CHELSEA PILON-SWANN

Remember Brandon Training School  Kingsland

2013 is the 20th anniversary of the closing of Brandon Training School. A display called Remember Brandon is set up in the Carleton Board Room upstairs. You can look at old photos and watch a video. There will be people there to answer questions and provide support.

LGBTQ Support Groups for People with Disabilities  Kingsland

… are for people with disabilities who are, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or who have questions about their sexual identity. Presenters will share their stories about coming out in the LGBTQ movement as well as coming out in the disability movement. RU12 supports 3 groups in Vermont where peers come together to talk and find support around a number of issues. Hear how some groups meet on-line using PalTalk.

DAVID FRYE, MIMI MURTAGH
MIKE NORTON, BRENDA PITMON, ISABELLA RYAN

Our Top 10 Favorite Apps for the iPad  Willsboro

We will demonstrate our "Top 10" favorite apps for the Apple iPad. These include apps for communication, apps to use as reminders, apps that help individuals with low vision, apps for organization, apps for writing, apps for working with money, apps for fidgeting, and apps for cooking and shopping. Please join us to see if there's an app that will work for you!

LESLEI ERMOLIOVICH

Getting a College Experience!  Valcour

Come hear about Stirling and other’s experiences going to college at the University of Vermont. Self-advocates gets support from a new program called Think College Vermont. They get to work with mentors who are UVM college students. Learn how you can take regular college classes with the support of a mentor and be included at UVM.

STIRLING PEEBLES, KIERSTEN HALLQUIST, BRYAN DAGUE & CORA SAGAR
HATS OFF to the
VT Developmental Disabilities Council

A heart-felt thank you from GMSA to the Council for funding conference scholarships

Center on Disability and Community Inclusion
University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service

CDCI is proud to be partnering with GMSA in 2013 to make life better for people with disabilities in Vermont

Center on Disability and Community Inclusion at UVM
Visit us on the web — http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/
Across the U.S., we represent the largest number of homecare workers like you. We are uniting today to protect funding and services for homecare workers and clients.

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(802) 489-5050
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Burlington, VT 05401

@HomecareVermont
QualityHomeCareVT
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Homecare Workers of AFSCME’s Vermont Homecare United

Salutes

Green Mountain Self-Advocates

Working together to fight for the funding our public programs need.

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Toll free phone: 866-388-9611
600 Blair Park, Suite 100, Williston, VT 05495
PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Adapted from Tracy Thresher’s Blog 8/2/2012

Yesterday I had the opportunity to meet with young representatives from the Vermont Workers’ Center. Sitting amongst us and having dialogue on topics that affect our lives, these young makers of positive change not only listened to our issues but pledged to continue to rise to walking the walk to ensure that all Vermonters have a voice. The Vermont Workers’ Center’s vision is to “Put People First.” To do so they have begun to canvas the state to open up dialogue with ALL Vermonters. The dialogue we are now having is a launch pad for change. Paramount to making change is including the stakeholders when inquiring what issues need to be addressed. The young twenty-something leaders have put people first by being instrumental in the passing of the Universal Healthcare Bill. The Vermont Worker’s Center is a force of inclusive political change in Vermont. Quietly building momentum to push through heavy political obstacles, making democracy a reality for all people is the work of the Vermont Workers’ Center. Their guiding principles are: Universality, Equity, Accountability, Transparency and Participation.

I think all of these principles need to be practiced to have a true democracy. Let’s continue to be in partnership with grassroots organizations to communicate the need for the supports for people to live lives of their choosing.
Join A Local Group!

Our Drop In Center
GATSA: Getting Acquainted Through Self-Advocacy
SAVY: Strong Advocacy Voices & You
Vermont Choices
Capital Advocates Together
Rockin’ Advocates of Montpelier/Barre
Friends Helping Friends
Randolph Area Peer Support
Connections of Peer Support
Advocates for Action
Families First Peer Support
VT Southern Self-Advocates
Bennington Peer Support
New Group Starting in Rutland
New Group Starting in Winooski
Next Steps Self-Advocates
Champlain Voices
Burlington Self-Advocacy Club
Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered of Rutland
Speak Up Addison County
Three LGBTQ Groups Supported By RU12 around the state

Local Self-Advocacy Contacts

Call Max 1-800-564-9990
Max can tell you how to connect with a self-advocacy group near you

Voices and Choices Conference
A Tribute to 2013 Award Winners

**COPS**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Jeffery Sheehan
Ally: Mona Distefano

**Capitol City Advocates**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Shea Martin
Ally: Jason Capobianco

**Rockin’ Advocates of Montpelier/Barre**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Sammy Badger
Ally: Wendy Currier

**STEP Self Advocates**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Nicole Villemaire
Ally: Julia Harvey

**Champlain Voices**
Self-Advocate of the Year: Beverly Williams
Ally: Lucy Rogate

**LGBTQ Support Groups**
Self-Advocate of the Year: David Frye
Ally: Brenda Pitmon

**Self-Advocate of the Year**
- Todd Ford: Ally - Jamie McClelland
- Sammy Badger: Ally - Wendy Currier
- Jeffery Sheehan: Ally - Mona Distefano
- Shea Martin: Ally - Jason Capobianco
- Beverly Williams: Ally - Lucy Rogate
- David Frye: Ally - Brenda Pitmon

**Ally**
- Jamie McClelland
- Wendy Currier
- Lucy Rogate
- Brenda Pitmon
A Tribute to 2012 Award Winners

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Tammy Lethridge
Ally: Donna Montag

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Admirer Billings
Ally: Kelly Renaud

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Adam Billings
Ally: Wendy Whaples

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Evan Cross
Ally: Jane Barron

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Michelle Olden
Ally: Brenda Lanou

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Gary Bergeron
Ally: Mary Blake

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Sam Parizo
Ally: Rebecca Holbrook

Self-Advocate of the Year:
Patty Grasset
Ally: Tina Lehulier
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Nominees For the Theresa Wood Citizenship Award

- Max Barrows, Worcester
- Randy Lizotte, St. Albans
- Paul Nichols, Burlington
- David Frye, Williston
- Dawn Brownlow, Brattleboro
- Robin Capron, West Burke
- Beth Noyes, Barnet
- James Paradis, Springfield
- Beth Noyes, Barnet
- James Paradis, Springfield
- Randy Lizotte, St. Albans
- Paul Nichols, Burlington
- David Frye, Williston
- Dawn Brownlow, Brattleboro
- Robin Capron, West Burke

The Theresa A. Wood Citizenship Award honors and carries on Theresa’s many years of dedicated work and commitment to full citizenship for people with developmental disabilities. The Citizenship Fund was established by Theresa’s friends, family and colleagues. This annual award recognizes a person who, through his or her contributions to the community, best shows Theresa’s values of:

1. Creativity
2. Determination
3. Sense of humor
4. Leadership
5. Commitment
6. Respect for all people
Map to Find Workshops

If you use a wheelchair and are going to workshops #8, #9 or #10. Take Elevator A to Floor 1. Next go down the hall past the restaurant, then take Elevator B to Floor G. (see on map below)

Walk Down a Few Stairs
Get to Workshops #7, #8, #9 or #10