

Maine State Motto

Dirigo means, “I Lead”





SPEAKING UP FOR US OF MAINE

Maine's Self-Advocacy Network

... every time we speak up for ourselves we make Maine a brighter place

Speaking Up for Us of Maine (SUFU)

Established in October 1993

What are SUFU's major activities or functions?

Major Activities and Functions:

- Support local and state self-advocacy organizations to network with each other.
- Share self-advocacy stories among ourselves and with others.
- Teach other people how to speak up for themselves.
- Start and help support local peer groups.
- Help people know their rights.
- Hold state and regional self-advocacy conferences.
- Have seats on councils, boards and committees.

What are SUFU's major activities or functions? (2)

Education and Training:

- Competitive employment
- Emergency preparedness
- Guardianship
- HAVA – Help America Vote Act
- Leadership
- Preventing bullying and hurtful language in schools
- Sexuality and relationships

(A recent thank-you note to SUFU from a student)

Dear E...

I am so sorry when you fell and when you were diagnosed with your disability. I am also sorry for when you got called a retard. I have also been called a retard. It made me so mad that I pushed the kid into a big puddle and got into a lot of trouble and I had to stay in for 3 days with no recesses.

thank you

P....

What are SUFU's major activities or functions? (3)

Legislative Activities:

- Speak to the Maine Legislature on important issues
- Provide testimony on individual bills
- Participate in Disability Advocacy Day and Disability Awareness Day at the State House

SUFU Member Anna McDougal Speaks with Maine State Representative David C. Webster during Disability Awareness Day – April 25, 2011



What are SUFU's major activities or functions? (4)

Collaborate with the State and Maine DD Network:

- Assist DDC, DRC and CCIDS by providing input for their annual priorities and five-year plans.
- Organize attendance and participation of self-advocates in DDC, DRC, CCIDS and State meetings and events.
- Participate in Disability Advocacy Day and Disability Awareness Day at the State House.

What are the resources for the self-advocacy organizations?

Name of self-advocacy organization	Who provides the resource(s)?	What resource(s) is provided?
Speaking Up for Us of Maine (SUFU)	Maine Department of Health and Human Services	\$113,000; trainings; mailings, advice; and promotion of Speaking Up for Us activities.
	Maine Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC)	\$75,000 annually with additional in-kind support; promotion of self-advocacy; Leadership Institute; Disability Advocacy Day; support and guidance; and formalized opportunities to provide input to Council State Plan.
	Disability Rights Center (DRC)	In-kind office space: use of conference rooms, copier and postage; advice; liaison; technical assistance and support including transportation; and fiscal agent for 10%.
	University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies (CCIDS)	SUFU website and technical support; financial support to SUFU to attend regional or national self-advocacy meetings; meeting space for SUFU; and serve as an ally to SUFU.

What has worked in your state for self-advocacy organizations?

- Taking the time to develop SUFU's state and local structure (building a strong organization)
- Learning to speak up for ourselves
- Providing meaningful training to peers
- Developing leaders and mentoring future leaders
- Participating in the legislative process
- Maintaining funding despite difficult financial times

What are some challenges or struggles that your state self-advocacy organization has faced?

- Transportation!
- Competitive employment
- Inadequate funding (dependent on State/DDC funding)
- Workgroups and committees request self-advocate participation, but don't provide natural supports
- Expanding SUFU membership to include:
 - Youth
 - Individuals on the autism spectrum
 - Members with other types of developmental disabilities

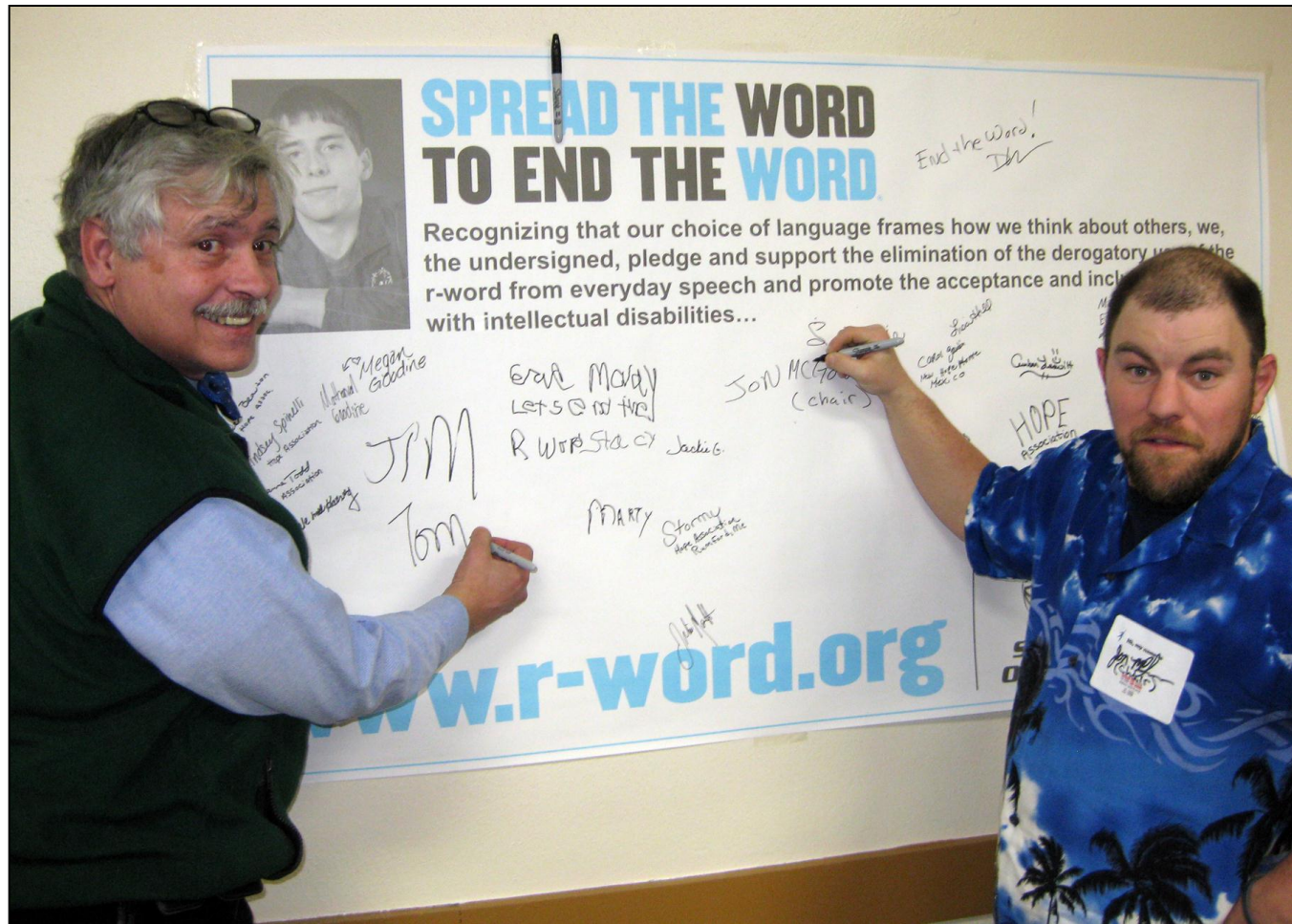
Yes, we do have a transportation issue...



What are you most proud of in regards to self-advocacy currently in your state?

- Educating self-advocates, agencies, and community members about what is important to people with disabilities
- Having a voice to help stop the use of the “R” word
- Empowering others: changing lives....saving lives
- Developing new leaders in the organization
- Promoting inclusion in schools by educating students and sharing personal stories
- Taking steps to become an independent organization
501(c)3

Maine State Senator Tom Saviello and SUFU Board Chair Jon McGovern signing the pledge: Third Annual “End the R-word” event – March 2, 2011



What goals or dreams does your state have for self-advocacy?

- Accessible transportation for advocates to attend local and statewide meetings and serve on councils, boards and committees
- Competitive, meaningful employment
- Financial independence for self-advocacy organizations
- Support of agencies to promote self-advocacy among the people they serve
- Expanding membership to help every person with a disability know their rights and have access to information

Maine Team Members

NAME		ORGANIZATION
Julia Bell	NACDD	Maine Developmental Disabilities Council
Staci Converse	NDRN	Disability Rights Center of Maine
Rachel Dyer	NACDD	Maine Developmental Disabilities Council
Geoffrey Gross	NASDDDS	Maine Department of Health & Human Services, OACPDS
Sandra Horne	UCEDD	University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies
Anna McDougal	Self-Advocate	Speaking Up for Us of Maine
Christina Mailhot	Self-Advocate	Speaking Up for Us of Maine
Kim Moody	NDRN	Disability Rights Center of Maine
Christian Powers	Self-Advocate	
Marc Roix	Self-Advocate	Maine Developmental Disabilities Council
Kathleen Shevenell	Self-Advocate	Strive U.
Lu Zeph	UCEDD	University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

THANK YOU FROM THE MAINE TEAM!

