

## Advocacy Spotlight

*Rachel Powell is a self advocate from Everett*

Rachel Powell, like so many others, had her final year of transition services abruptly interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately for her, she was able to complete her program, and gain employment with Direct Interactions as a quality specialist. But others weren't as lucky.

The shortened 2020 school year greatly impacted Rachel and others in the program. "It was not easy for students in transition, missing that one on one time was hard. The three months at the end were very difficult, it was distracting, hard to focus."

After completing her transition program in 2020, Rachel was approached by her teachers to work with future transition students through their leadership program.

Rachel decided to take action in supporting her fellow transition students, and became an active participant in the legislative process to accomplish this. She contacted her legislatures, wrote letters, and her hard work helped ensure that additional transition funding will be available for those students who lost valuable services due to COVID-19. Her hard work to support this measure will help hundreds of students recoup lost time.



Now Rachel works with other transition students at the behest of her teachers, and is speaking to these students regularly about her experience and what they can expect post graduation.

Beyond helping transition students, Rachel also works with Miracles and Memories. There she helps lead meetings and games designed to encourage social interaction and asking questions.

"Helping others learn how to ask questions is important. When you ask questions, you can advocate for yourself."

When she is not excelling as a young self advocate, Rachel enjoys spending her time with her dog Pepper. "She loves to play chase, and is very fun and jumpy."

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*“Continuous effort—  
not strength or  
Intelligence—is the key  
to unlocking our  
potential”  
- Winston Churchill*

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# Advocacy in Action

## Virtual Legislative Coffees!

The Arc of Snohomish County is proud to once again work with those in the community to host legislative coffees for each legislative district in Snohomish County. These are a great opportunity to get to know your legislators in an informal setting, and discuss with them the issues that matter to you the most. Legislative coffees are low-key, casual encounters that anyone can host. This year, as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we are looking for hosts that can host either in person OR remotely, it's up to you!

We hope to get hosts for all seven legislative districts in Snohomish County. If you don't know what district you are in, go to <https://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/> and enter your address to find out what district you are in, and who your legislators are!

While we need hosts, we also need participants as well. We know that hosting one of these isn't for everyone, but we still need people to attend and engage their legislators. Feel free to ask them anything, whether it a vague topic you want to know more about, or their specific thoughts on a particular bill. These are designed to help establish a rapport with the legislators and those they represent so that they can truly represent their constituents wants and desires in the state legislature. Getting to know you is critical to their ability to accurately do their job, and these coffees provide a great opportunity for that.

We at The Arc know that not everyone is in the same position in regards to COVID-19 protocol, and as a host, you will get to determine if your coffee will be in person or remote. If in

person, we will also be setting up a remote option for those who wish to attend in that manner. We know this works better for some people, and want to do everything to make sure we can include as many people as possible.

If you are interested in hosting or attending a legislative coffee, you can fill out our online form about them here:

[\*\*Legislative Coffee Interest Form\*\*](#)

Be on the lookout for more information about dates and times for these coffees in the coming months, and we hope to see you there!

Questions? Contact Rachel Kube | [Rachel@arcsno.org](mailto:Rachel@arcsno.org) | 425.258.2459 x107



# Advocacy in Action

## Legislative Recap

The legislative session is officially over, and overall this was a very productive session for the IDD community. Many new programs were funded, more were created, and the operating budgets brought a large amount of funds into DD services.

While the signing of SB 5284 ending subminimum wage was of course a massive victory, many other bills were also signed into law, adding benefits sorely needed to the DD community. Among these were SB 5237, the Fair Start for Kids Act, which greatly expands pre-K services for children, including subsidies to child care providers who provide care for children with special needs. A number of education bills were also signed, including HB 1044 which creates postsecondary education opportunities for those leaving the prison system. This bill contains very specific language within it to provide for those with DD to get the support they need to succeed in this program as well, making this a boon for those formerly incarcerated individuals with DD. Students suffering from seizure disorders also received new legislation requiring training of all personell in schools in how to respond to seizure situations, a law that will definitely help prevent future complications from seizures.



Not all news is good news though, as many important bills didn't make it through committees to receive a floor vote. SB 5268, which would have put forward massive changes first introduced in the Ruckleshaus report from 2019, failed to make it out of committee. Further compounding this loss, the only piece in that bill that was opposed by the DD community was the \$120 million dollars for a nursing facility at Fircrest. That funding was removed from the bill to make sure the bill didn't have opposition, but then later added to the capital budget anyways. So not only did SB 5268 not become law, the one point that vast majority of the DD community didn't want was funded.

But all is not lost for SB 5268, and indeed, every bill that didn't pass this session. As this was the first year of the biennium, all bills can pick up where they left off in the following year. This means SB 5268, which already cleared the state senate, doesn't need to go through the senate again, it gets to start in the house. This will be a vital bill to support in the upcoming session.

If you would like to know more about the bills that passed or didn't pass, or get involved in the legislative process, contact [Jake@arcsno.org](mailto:jake@arcsno.org) for more information.

*"Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of the hard work you already did."*  
- Newt Gingrich

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# Arc News: New Staff!

The Arc is excited to introduce two new staff members, Felisa Castellanos and Luz Cobián. Felisa and Luz are both new Hispanic Outreach Coordinators

## Felisa Castellanos

¡Hola!, my name is Felisa Garcia Castellanos! I am a Mexican immigrant and I am still in the process of acculturation. Before meeting The Arc, I didn't know about all kinds of rights and services that people with disabilities have access to. In my home country, people with disabilities don't have access to services and don't have benefits at all such as here in the U.S. My son was diagnosed with ADHD and ODD at the age of 8 years old when we were in Mexico, but we didn't have occupational therapy, 504, or IEP plans either. My son also has different learning disabilities.

We just moved 5 years ago to the U.S. We have been living in 2 different states: Washington and Arizona. 2 years ago, I enrolled at Edmonds College to study English and Human Services in order to learn the American System. But then, I was very lucky to meet The Arc Snohomish County. They have supported and taught me not only how to advocate for my son, but for all the families. The best part is that I've found a family.



*"The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain."*

- Dolly Parton

## Luz Cobián

I am a Mother of two young boys, and I spend the bulk of my time either supporting them doing Zoom school or taking them for nature walks. In my free time I enjoy reading everything from science to art articles and listening to music.

I became involved in this work because it is close to my heart, my child is Autistic and as I find my way as his Mom to support his needs and enrich his life, I have learned about the challenges which children and families with disabilities experience. I love to work in a diverse community and hope to bring awareness to the barriers that exist and build bridges across our community to empower people and their families. Together we can create an inclusive community!

### Miercoles De Mamás Cocina Y Manualidades

Wednesday, August 11 | 7pm-8pm |

[Luz@arcsno.org](mailto:Luz@arcsno.org) 425.258.2459 x115

Un grupo de apoyo para mamás de niños con discapacidad intelectual y/o del desarrollo. [JOIN HERE](#)

### Padres Unidos

Fridays Weekly | 10am-11am |

[Felisa@arcsno.org](mailto:Felisa@arcsno.org) 425.258.2459 x114

Un grupo de apoyo en para padres de niños con discapacidad intelectual y/o desarrollo. [JOIN HERE](#)

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**We're here to help  
you have a voice**

You are the expert in telling your story and how it relates to decisions being made by lawmakers.

Although impacting government may feel overwhelming, we're here to help you have a voice.

It only takes a few steps:

**Be informed**

- Sign up for Action Alerts

**Get Connected**

- Join The Arc
- Join a parent coalition
- Join a self-advocacy group

**Take Action**

- Visit The Arc of Washington State's Online Action Center
- Send emails
- Make phone calls
- Attend town hall meetings
- Participate in Advocacy Days
- Meet with your legislators virtually

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# Tools & Resources

**Sign up**

## Legislative Alerts & Updates

The Arc of Washington State | <http://capwiz.com/arcwa/mlm/signup/>  
Sign up for legislative action alerts related to developmental disability. Receive the information you need to voice your opinions on bills during the legislative session. Alerts provide you with messages for your legislators that you can use as is, or edit using your own words. Enter your name and address and click! Your message will automatically be sent to all of your legislators. Toll free Legislative Hotline 1-800-562-6000. Email or call, action takes less than 5 minutes!

**Find Your**

## Legislative District and Elected Officials

Washington Legislature | <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>  
Find your legislative district and elected officials.

**Hot Tips**

## Legislative Advocates on Developmental Disabilities

The Arc of Washington State |

<https://arcwa.org/content/uploads/sites/35/2019/11/Hot-Tips-2020.pdf>

Some of the topics included:

- Tips for meeting with elected officials.
- How to create a short, clear message.
- The bill process—how a bill becomes a law.
- The state budget process.

## Coming Up!

September 13, 7pm

### Recovery Services and Progress Data

Presented by Rose Spidell, Office of Education Ombuds

- What are Recovery Services? When might they be provided? What might they look like?
- What are ways to ask for progress data?
- How do we understand Progress Data?
- How can we see the rate of progress? What questions can we ask if progress is slower than expected, or there's regression?

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Monday, Sept 27, 7pm

### Restarting School and Discussing Recovery Services

Presented by Scott Raub, OSPI Special Education Parent Liaison

- \*Understanding the difference between Recovery and Compensatory
- \*Requesting re-evaluations and other services
- \*Procedural Safeguards

[REGISTER HERE](#)

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# Get Involved

*Note that all events are currently conducted remotely. We will be conducting in person events again once it is safe for all interested parties. Thank you for your understanding at this time.*

## I.CAN Women's Self-Advocacy Group

**2nd Tuesday of each month | 10:30am–12pm**

We are a group of self-advocates open to all women ages 16 and up. A casual environment that combines learning with fun experiences. We share resources and skills, and hold the belief that everyone has something to contribute to our group. Please contact Kylie Walsh at [Kylie@arcsno.org](mailto:Kylie@arcsno.org) or 425-258-2459 x121 or Corinna Fale at [Corinna@arcsno.org](mailto:Corinna@arcsno.org) or 425-258-2459 x103.

## Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL)

**2nd Tuesday of each month | 1pm–4pm**

Group of self-advocates focused on legislative change. Open to all. SAIL is a statewide coalition of people with developmental disabilities that strives to shape public policies that affect people with developmental disabilities.

Please contact Corinna Fale at [Corinna@arcsno.org](mailto:Corinna@arcsno.org) or 425-258-2459 x103.

## People First of Snohomish County

**4th Tuesday of each month | 11am–12:30pm**

A self-advocacy organization by and for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We are focused on educating ourselves and others, advocating for our rights, having fun! We believe we are PEOPLE FIRST and our disabilities are secondary. Please contact Kylie Walsh at [Kylie@arcsno.org](mailto:Kylie@arcsno.org) or 425-258-2459 x121

# Did You Know?

### It's never too early to advocate!

The legislative session has ended, but that doesn't mean the hard advocacy work has! You can continue to reach out to your legislators to tell them the importance of I/DD issues, and participate in other advocacy programs such as legislative coffees. For more information on any advocacy suggestions, contact [Jake@arcsno.org](mailto:Jake@arcsno.org) to answer any questions you might have, and GET INVOLVED!

# Federal Bills of Interest

### Proposed Legislation—HCBS Access Act of 2021

The proposed bill cites as its purpose: To require coverage of home and community-based services under state plans to ensure individuals with disabilities and older adults live in the most integrated setting without delayed access to necessary services and rights; to provide medical assistance for those whose income and resources are insufficient to meet the costs of necessary medical services and rehabilitation; to ensure individuals with disabilities attain and retain the capability to independence and self-care; to ensure individuals with disabilities receive the services they require to live in their community; to streamline access to HCBS by eliminating need for States to repeatedly apply for waivers; and increase the capacity of services available in the community to individuals with disabilities. This bill has yet to be introduced to Congress.