



REACH, Inc. Monthly Newsletter May 2025

From the Desk of the Executive Director

REACH staff and individuals proudly joined over 120 advocates who traveled to Juneau, Alaska, for the 38th Annual Key Campaign. Together, we raised our voices on behalf of Alaskans with intellectual and developmental disabilities, meeting with every state legislator to highlight five key priorities for change.



Pictured: Naomi Studevan

From the rally on the Capitol steps to impactful one-on-one meetings with lawmakers, REACH was part of a powerful, unified presence that included partners like Peer Power, Alzheimer's Adult Day Service Program, Association on Aging with Developmental Disabilities, ALLPA, the Governor's Council and dedicated family members.

Advocates spoke passionately about the urgent need to expand early intervention services, eliminate waitlists, modernize guardianship laws, improve public transportation access and require universal changing spaces in public buildings. These conversations left a lasting impression, with many state legislators, showing strong support for our shared vision.

Thank you to everyone who helped amplify the message: We're not going away, until we end the wait. It's time to advocate for a better day💙.

With gratitude,

Naomi Studevan
Executive Director



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ILP Activity: Nature Walk Sensory Bin

Enjoy this outdoor explore and play idea from our Infant Learning Program team.

The days are getting longer and there's so much to find on our beautiful trails and even in your own backyard! A nature walk can lead to many treasures. Collect some treasures and bring a few inside to create your own nature sensory bin. This can be a fun opportunity to explore different textures, model language and share in the joy of new experiences.



Celebrating Success in Supported Employment

SaMu started work at the SLAM a few months ago. She wanted a job coach to be with her every shift so that she felt comfortable learning tasks and navigating the building. She has excelled over the past few months and is doing fantastic work at the SLAM.

The custodial department offered her more hours on two separate occasions because she's doing such excellent work. She now works every Saturday instead of every other Saturday.

SaMu has developed enough confidence to where she says she doesn't need a job coach anymore because she can work independently. Previously, SaMu worked for Joann's Fabric where she worked without a job coach. It's amazing to hear SaMu gain confidence at the SLAM, advocate for herself and request to work independently.

Soon SaMu's supported employment will be fading her job coaches away and doing minimal check-ins with her at work. She's an amazing success story about the power of growing confidence and independence.

Ryan Hellman,
Employment Specialist

Celebrate
Your
Success!

A Tip From the Team

“

I try to put myself in other's shoes as often as possible to see their perspective, and to understand how they experience life. This keeps me grounded in reality and helps me better connect with those we serve and those we collaborate with.

”

- T.W., REACH manager



Enjoy a Laugh

Why did the Jedi start a comedy club?

Because laughter is the path to the light side.

(Also... the Sith don't appreciate a good pun.)

Happy World Laughter Day — and May the 4th be with you!



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Thank You Survey Participants

Thank you to everyone who participated in our customer survey this past January. Your feedback has been invaluable, offering insights and constructive criticism. We've heard your concerns about the need for additional staff and improved communication, and we want to assure you that these issues are being addressed. We also received a lot of positive feedback, and we're excited to share some of the highlights from the survey.

- "Thank you for all you do! 😊 We don't know where we'd be without REACH! Five Stars!"
- "Great job from REACH with communication and with care."
- "I tell everyone about the amazing care REACH provides!"
- "We can tell the staff truly care about the recipient."

Thank you again for your input, it's helping us get better every day. Results from the survey will soon be available on our website.

Thank You!

Shoutout to Our Rockstar Custodial Team!

We want to give a huge round of applause to our incredible custodial team members who have not only fulfilled their mandatory annual cleanings, but have also gone above and beyond by volunteering for multiple additional cleanings throughout the year. Your hard work, dedication, and willingness to step up hasn't gone unnoticed — and we truly appreciate you!

Thank you,
Custodial Management



REACHing Out INCORPORATED

What's Cooking at REACH?

The third Friday of each month is a blast at the Steelhead house, with Bingo and prizes for everyone who plays. Not to mention the tasty, healthy snacks that keep up the energy of our players. We laugh, play and celebrate every win with cheers and applause. Many of our residents are trying to maintain a healthy diet. We want to be sure that what we serve is tasty and nutritious. Here's one of our biggest hits.

Healthier Veggie Dip

Vegetables exist to carry veggie dip. However, pre-packaged dips are full of fat, calories, preservatives and other not-so-good-for-you ingredients. Here's a high-protein, low-calorie solution packed full of tons of flavor and only three ingredients.

16 oz cottage cheese
1 pkg Ranch salad dressing mix
Milk (to thin the dip to your liking)

Add the cottage cheese and Ranch mix to a blender and blend until smooth and creamy. Add milk in small amounts and blend to preferred consistency. We like to experiment with flavors by adding fresh or dried dill, fresh garlic, hot sauce or coarsely ground black pepper. Serve with fresh cut vegetables like carrots, celery, peppers, cucumbers and broccoli.



Welcome to the Team

Please help us extend a warm welcome to our new employees who recently joined the REACH team! We are excited to have you join our awesome organization and bring your skills to the people and businesses we serve:

Randi P.
Victoria D.
Nymphia L.

Nicole A.
Jared JH.
Andrew S.

March & April Employee Anniversaries

We're incredibly proud of the hardworking people who work at REACH, and their dedication does not go unnoticed! Please join us in celebrating the following employee anniversaries:

MARCH

Colleen James, 34 Years
Donald Jackowick, 18 Years
Ruth Legg, 18 Years
Kaelen, 16 Years
Xiao Lu, 14 Years
Josefina Quirino Rosas, 14 Years
Hannah Ashenfelter, 13 Years
Charles Mattingly, 9 Years
Joshua Berg, 8 Years
Michael Livingston, 5 Years
Tammra Birch, 4 Years
Martin Reid, 3 Years
Renee Sullivan, 3 Years
Erin Meade, 2 Years
Christine Wick, 2 Years

APRIL

Joaquin Romero, 21 Years
Rebecca Brewer, 13 Years
Barbara Sandberg, 13 Years
Jimmy Merculief, 11 Years
Halatono Tupou, 10 Years
Tina Kegg, 7 Years
Jacinda Fairbanks, 6 Years
Anthony Joshua Lopez, 6 Years
Maria Manila, 6 Years
Ligia Romero, 4 Years
Debbie Riordan, 2 Years
Shane Walker, 2 Years



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Upcoming Events

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

May 3: 15th Annual Juneau Maritime Festival, 11:00 am – 7:00 pm at Peratrovich Plaza

May 4: World Laughter Day

May 7: REACH Mother's Day Gift Making Event, 4 pm at Northland
We'll be making cards and simple bead necklaces for everyone's moms!

May 21: REACH Rocks Event! 4pm at Northland
We're taking the client painted rocks with kind affirmations written on them from our last craft event and putting them out into the community. I'm borrowing the REACH bus and loading up all our individuals to place them around town!