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REACH Newsletter | July Edition

Welcome to our latest newsletter! We're excited to bring you updates on what's been happening at Reach AK and what's coming up. *Let's dive in!*





Disability Pride Month Spotlight: Solomon Story of Growth

Seven years ago, Solomon walked through the doors of Bartlett Regional Hospital as a Project SEARCH intern. Today, he walks those same halls as a valued member of the Same Day Surgery team, proving that when potential is recognized, opportunity is embraced, and determination is met with support, lives are transformed.

At 30 years old, Solomon's journey is one of perseverance, growth, and finding where he belongs.

Before Project SEARCH, Solomon gained work experience at 9th Street Cafe, but like many people entering the workforce, he wasn't sure what career path was right for him. In 2018, he joined Project SEARCH at Bartlett Regional Hospital, where he had the opportunity to build workplace skills through hands-on learning and real-world experience.

After successfully completing Project SEARCH in 2019, Solomon accepted a permanent position in Bartlett Regional Hospital's Same Day Surgery Department, where he continues to work today.

In his role, Solomon helps prepare rooms between patients, turns over beds, restocks supplies, and ensures the department is clean, organized, and ready for the next patient. While much of his work happens behind the scenes, it plays an important role in helping the surgical team provide excellent patient care.

Over the past seven years, Solomon has become much more than a former intern. He has become a dependable coworker, a trusted member of the team, and someone whose positive attitude makes a difference every day.



His supervisor shared:

"Solomon is a valued member of the Bartlett team who brings a positive attitude and warm smile to work every day. He is hardworking, dependable, and always willing to lend a helping hand to those around him. Over his many years at Bartlett, Solomon has built meaningful relationships and has become a source of joy and encouragement within the department. His kindness, dedication, and strong work ethic make a lasting impact on both his coworkers and our organization. We are grateful to have Solomon as part of the Bartlett family and are proud to recognize him during Disability Pride Month."

Solomon's journey is a reminder that meaningful employment is about more than having a job. It's about discovering your strengths, building confidence, creating lasting relationships, and finding a place where you can make a difference.

This Disability Pride Month, we proudly celebrate Solomon's accomplishments and thank him for the dedication, kindness, and positivity he brings to Bartlett Regional Hospital every day. His story is a wonderful example of what can happen when opportunity meets determination.

Mitchell Strikes Gold at Special Olympics Summer Games



Mitchell has been a dedicated participant in Special Olympics basketball for several years, continually developing his skills and love for the game.

During the first weekend of June, he traveled to Anchorage to compete in the Summer Games, where athletes participated in both basketball competitions and skills events. This year marked a special accomplishment for Mitchell as he earned a gold medal in Level 1 basketball skills.

While the medal is a wonderful achievement, Mitchell's growth extends far beyond the court. Over the years, he has gained confidence, built independence, and demonstrated remarkable determination through his commitment to the sport. Watching his hard work, perseverance, and positive attitude lead to success has been truly inspiring. We are proud of all that Mitchell has accomplished and look forward to seeing what he achieves next.



Kai, Andres, and Jacob Bring Home 5th Place at Special Olympics State Basketball Games

Congratulations to Kai, Andres, and Jacob for their outstanding performance at the Special Olympics State Basketball Games, where they proudly earned 5th place! Their hard work, teamwork, and determination were evident in every game as they competed with focus and heart against strong teams from across the state.

We are incredibly proud of their effort and sportsmanship throughout the tournament. Achievements like this reflect not only their dedication to the sport, but also the spirit of perseverance and teamwork they bring every day.



**Abby Jones**

Glacierwoods Group Home Manager

Meet Abby Jones – New Group Home Manager at Glacierwoods

REACH is excited to welcome Abby Jones as the new Group Home Manager at Glacierwoods.

Abby brings a strong background in grassroots advocacy and veteran policy, where she worked closely with communities to address challenges and support meaningful, positive change. Her experience has strengthened her commitment to service and creating opportunities for individuals to thrive.

What drew Abby to REACH is the organization's deep commitment to supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in living full, independent, and meaningful lives. She is inspired by the person-centered approach and the genuine care shown by staff, families, and the individuals supported across REACH programs.

Abby shared:

"I'm excited to join REACH as the new Group Home Manager and to be part of an organization that makes such a meaningful difference in people's lives. My background is in grassroots advocacy and veteran policy, where I worked closely with communities to address challenges and support positive change. These experiences have strengthened my commitment to serving others and helping create opportunities for people to thrive. What drew me to REACH is its commitment to helping individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities live full, independent, and meaningful lives. I'm inspired by the organization's person-centered approach and the genuine care shown by the staff, families, and individuals they support. I'm grateful for the opportunity to join the team in the beautiful Juneau, Alaska area and look forward to building relationships, learning from those around me, and contributing to the incredible work REACH does every day!"

Welcome to the team, Abby! We are excited to have you with us and look forward to the positive impact you will make in the lives of those we support.





Custodial Employee Spotlight: William Sammato

We'd like to recognize **William Sammato** for his continued growth and dedication as a valued member of the custodial team.

"Sylvia Johnson shared, 'William has shown remarkable improvement over the years as a lead for S.O.B., consistently stepping up whenever tasks need to be completed or covered. He is known for being dependable, willing to jump in wherever needed, and always ready to take on new responsibilities.

His positive attitude and commitment to learning have not gone unnoticed. William's hard work helps keep operations running smoothly, and his willingness to support the team reflects the kind of reliability and teamwork we deeply appreciate.

Thank you, William, for your dedication and all that you do."

We are proud to have team members like William who continue to grow, contribute, and support those around them. His work makes a meaningful difference every day, and we appreciate the heart he brings to the team.



REACH Connects with Job Seekers at Local Hiring Events

REACH recently had the opportunity to connect with community members at two local hiring events—the Juneau Job Center Hiring Event and the Tlingit & Haida Job Fair at Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall.

At both events, our team engaged with job seekers who are interested in meaningful careers supporting individuals with disabilities. We shared information about current opportunities at REACH, including Direct Service Professional (DSP), Job Coach – Supported Employment, and Custodian positions. It was a pleasure meeting so many passionate and motivated individuals who are interested in making a difference in our community. Thank you to everyone who stopped by to learn more about REACH and the work we do. We look forward to welcoming new team members who share our commitment to inclusion, independence, and community engagement.

REACH, Inc.'s Summer Community Resource Fair & Disability Pride Celebration

Join REACH, Inc. for a joyful afternoon of community, celebration, and connection at our Summer Community Resource Fair & Disability Pride Celebration. This annual event brings people together to enjoy the summer season while honoring and uplifting Disability Pride in a welcoming and inclusive space.

Guests can look forward to live music, delicious food, giveaways and prizes, as well as arts, crafts, and games for all ages. Local nonprofits and community partners will also be hosting resource tables, offering opportunities to learn about services, explore supports, and strengthen community connections.



Save The Date!

July 24, 2026



This festive event is a chance to come together, share resources, and celebrate Disability Pride while highlighting the many valuable services available in our community. Whether you come to enjoy the activities, connect with others, or simply spend a summer afternoon by the beach, everyone is welcome.

Mark your calendars! We look forward to gathering at Savikko Park for a day filled with connection, celebration, and community. Stay tuned for more details as the event gets closer, and we hope to see you there!



HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Please note that REACH Shredding and the REACH main office will be closed for the holiday.



July 3
Independence Day

"REACH, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer committed to inclusive hiring and we strongly encourage individuals of all abilities to apply"

Join our Team

WE ARE

- DSP (\$20-\$23/hr)
- Job Coach (\$20-\$23/hr)
- Custodian (\$13.00- \$15.45)

HIRING!

Apply Now!

907-586-8228
applications@reachak.org

NOW HIRING: CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

Looking for meaningful work that makes a difference? REACH is currently hiring for several positions, including Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), Job Coaches, and Custodians.

Join a team dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live meaningful, independent lives. Whether you're supporting people in their daily goals, helping individuals succeed in the workplace, or providing essential custodial services, your work can have a lasting impact on our community.

Visit our careers page to learn more and apply today!



Congratulations to Our Staff Appreciation Winner Nympha Lopez!

Please join us in congratulating Nympha Lopez, our Staff Appreciation winner for this month!

Nympha has been an incredible asset to our team. She began her journey with us at the front desk in reception, where she consistently greeted everyone with professionalism and kindness. Since then, she has grown into our Marketing and Community Engagement Specialist, taking on new responsibilities with creativity, dedication, and enthusiasm.

Nympha's willingness to learn, adapt, and go above and beyond has made a lasting impact on our organization. She brings positive energy to everything she does and represents our mission with excellence through our online presence and daily interactions. Thank you, Nympha, for your hard work, commitment, and the passion you bring to your role every day. We are grateful to have you on our team and are proud to recognize you as this month's Staff Appreciation winner. Congratulations, Nympha!

EMPLOYEES MARKING ANOTHER YEAR OF DEDICATION

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 for the month of June:

Jacqueline Bell - EC EDUC (25 years)
Maria Rosales - DSP (21 years)
Jennifer Bellman - DSP II (16 years)
Michelle Boster - Cust State (14 years)
Corazon Acosta - DSP (11 years)
Thomas Sasser - CUST FED (10 years)
Gloria Magallanes - DSP (12 years)
Nita Budhrani - DSP (9 years)
Alan Tolles - DSP (8 years)
Jacob Mallinger - Shredder (5 years)
Donald Wilson - Job Coach I (5 years)
Cass Chase-Wilson - SR HR Generalist (5 years)

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:

Beth Hogue - Job Coach I
Vey Harris - DSP

CHEERS TO OUR JULY BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS!

This month, we're celebrating the birthdays of some of our amazing employees! Join us in recognizing their special day and wishing them joy, success, and a fantastic year ahead.

Diana Austin - July 07
Jeffery Lane - July 10
Xavier Martinez - July 12
Renee Sullivan - July 13
Justin Roberts - July 21
Kathleen Willard - July 24



A photograph of four men sitting on a dark leather couch in a room with large windows. The man on the far left is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt and khaki pants. The man next to him is wearing a dark hoodie and khaki pants. The man in the center is wearing a grey t-shirt and khaki pants. The man on the far right is wearing a blue t-shirt and khaki pants. They are all smiling at the camera. The text "July is Disability Pride Month" is overlaid in large white letters.

July is Disability Pride Month

A message from our community

At REACH, we see every day how meaningful opportunities, supportive environments, and inclusive workplaces create real change. Disability Pride Month is a reminder that inclusion is not just a value, it is action. It is something we build together through understanding, respect, and opportunity.

Moving forward

This month and beyond, we encourage everyone to:

- Listen to and amplify disabled voices
- Learn about accessibility and inclusion
- Challenge barriers when you see them
- Celebrate the achievements and contributions of people with disabilities

Disability Pride Month is not only about awareness—it is about belonging.

Why It Matters

Disability Pride Month is celebrated each July to recognize the history, achievements, experiences, and contributions of people with disabilities. It is a time to promote inclusion, challenge stereotypes, and celebrate disability as a natural and valuable part of human diversity.

Did You Know?

- Disability is the largest minority group in the world and it is a group that anyone can join at any point in life.
- The Disability Pride Flag symbolizes the diversity, strength, and unity of the disability community.
- Disability Pride is about embracing identity, promoting visibility, and recognizing that people with disabilities belong in every aspect of community life.

Quote of the Month

"The world does not need 'perfect' people. It needs whole people." – Unknown

Too often, people are measured by what they cannot do instead of what they can. But when we slow down and truly see people, we find ability, creativity, resilience, and purpose in places we may have overlooked. This month is about honoring that truth—and building communities where people are not defined by limits, but by their full humanity.





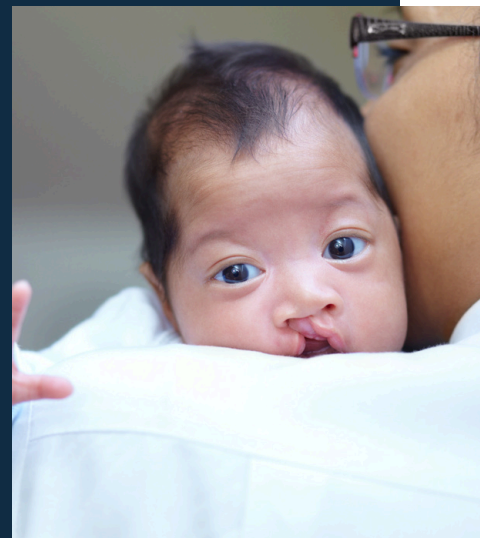
Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month: The Pain You Can't Always See

"Did you know kids get arthritis too?"

June is Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month, a time to recognize that kids get arthritis too, even though it's often thought of as an adult condition. Juvenile arthritis is an autoimmune disease that can cause pain, stiffness, swelling, and fatigue, making everyday activities like playing, learning, and socializing more challenging for children. Because many symptoms are not always visible, kids may be quietly managing discomfort while still trying to keep up with school and friendships. This month reminds us how important awareness, early support, and understanding are. With patience, flexibility, and compassion from families, educators, and communities, we can help ensure children feel included, supported, and able to fully participate in the moments that make childhood special.

National Cleft & Craniofacial Awareness Month: More Than What Meets the Eye

July is National Cleft & Craniofacial Awareness Month—a time to recognize individuals born with cleft lip, cleft palate, and other craniofacial differences. A cleft lip or palate is one of the most common birth differences, affecting about 1 in 1,000 babies, and occurs when a baby's lip or mouth does not fully form during pregnancy. These conditions can impact speech, hearing, feeding, and dental development, often requiring surgeries and ongoing care throughout childhood. But beyond medical needs, each person has their own story, strengths, and identity that are not defined by their diagnosis. This month reminds us to lead with awareness, compassion, and inclusion—so every individual feels seen, respected, and supported.



National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month: Every Voice Matters

July is National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to recognize the unique mental health challenges faced by racial and ethnic minority communities and the importance of equitable, culturally responsive care. Many individuals still face barriers like stigma, limited access, and lack of representation in support services. This month reminds us that mental health care should reflect every background and lived experience. When people feel seen and understood, healing becomes more possible.



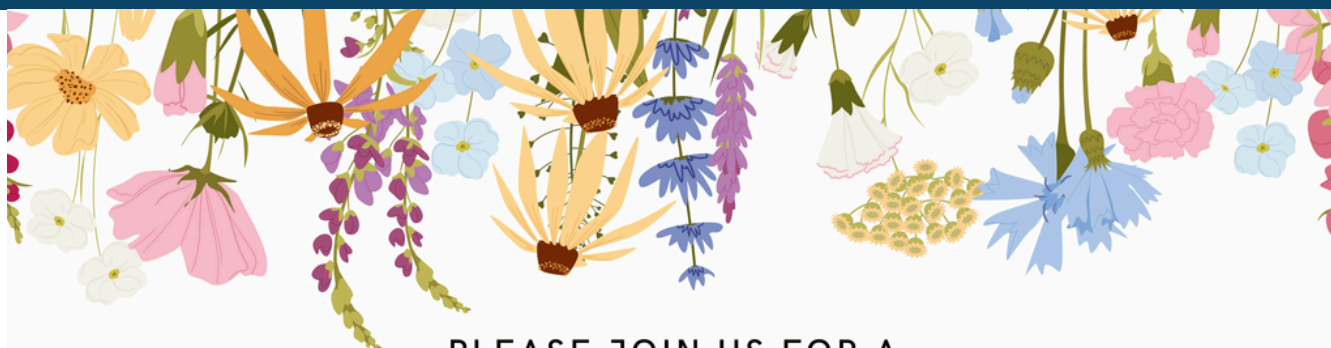
JOIN US FOR A SUPPORTIVE, HANDS-ON CLASS DESIGNED FOR PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES, FOCUSED ON BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE IN EVERYDAY CLEANING SKILLS. WE'LL SHARE HELPFUL TIPS, SIMPLE TECHNIQUES, AND PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT DEVELOPING LIFE SKILLS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING—AND ENJOY A TREAT ALONG THE WAY!

**YOU WILL LEARN
PROPER SKILLS IN:**

- Surface cleaning
- Sweeping & Dustpan Use
- Vacuuming
- Safe Trash Disposal
- Laundry Tips and Tricks

**WHEN, WHERE,
WHAT TO BRING**

- July 10th - 4pm-5:30pm
- 9377 Northland St. Juneau, AK
- Supplies and smores are provided, bring a great attitude!



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

Bloom & Balance Class



Join us for a welcoming, hands-on Bloom & Balance class open to people of all abilities, where you can learn and share in a supportive setting. Together, we'll plant a flower while exploring our feelings—both the good and the challenging—and learn simple coping skills and calming techniques to support emotional well-being. It's a meaningful space to grow confidence and build life skills for independent living.

JULY 17TH AT 4PM - 5:30PM
9377 Northland Street Juneau, AK 99801



COMMUNITY EVENTS

DON'T MISS OUT!

JULY 2026

JULY 01

5:30pm-8:30pm First
Wednesday of each month

NAMI SUPPORT GROUP - DBT SKILLS WORKSHOP

8711 Teal St; Main Floor Conference Room

Join NAMI Juneau's monthly DBT skills workshop to learn simple tools for managing emotions and stress.

JULY 02

First Thursday of the month
Around 5:30 PM start time

ENGINEERING ON TAP

Devil's Club Brewing Company; Downstairs

A monthly community event with short talks by local experts and a casual Q&A

JULY 03

July 3, 2026, 7:00pm

THE ROMANCE OF MAGNO RUBIO

Filipino Community Hall 251 S Franklin St Juneau, AK

A play about a Filipino farmworker in 1930s California whose pen-pal romance leads to hard truths about love and identity.

JULY 5

Every Sunday
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

SIP & STITCH (CRAFTING SOCIAL AT HERITAGE COFFEE)

Heritage Coffee Roasting Company

A casual drop-in crafting group where people can knit, crochet, or do fiber arts together while socializing.

JULY 5

Every Monday
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

MONDAY BOARD GAME NIGHT (DEVIL'S CLUB BREWING)

Heritage Coffee Roasting Company

A casual drop-in crafting group where people can knit, crochet, or do fiber arts together while socializing.

JULY 7

5:30pm-7:30pm

SEED ART WORKSHOP

Mendenhall Valley Public Library

Free drop-in art workshop at the Valley Library to create seed art in a relaxed, creative community setting.

JULY 8

Every Wednesday
11:00 AM

SENIOR CHAIR YOGA & LUNCH (JUNEAU SENIOR CENTER)

Juneau Senior Center 895 W 12th St, Juneau, AK

A gentle chair yoga session for older adults, followed by a community lunch in a welcoming, social setting.

JULY 10

Fridays, 12:00pm-
1:00pm

FRIDAY NOON ORGAN CONCERTS

State Office Building - 8th Floor Lobby Willoughby Street

Free weekly noon concerts on the historic Kimball Theatre Organ featuring rotating organists in a relaxed public setting.

JULY 11

11:30am-2pm

GLACIER CINEMA'S FREE SUMMER FILM (BAD GUYS 2)

Glacier Cinemas 9091 Cinema Drive

Free community screening of The Bad Guys 2, a family-friendly animated film about friendship, trust, and change.

JULY 15

12:00pm-1:00pm

TRAUMATIC & ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

8711 Teal St Juneau, AK 99801

Monthly TABI Support Group offering peer support, shared experiences, and resources for individuals with brain injuries.

JULY 16

5:30pm-7:30pm

MINI FIG PAINT AND SIP (ALL AGES)

Devil's Club Brewing - 100 N Franklin St,

A casual social event where participants paint figurines in a relaxed, beginner-friendly setting with provided supplies and guidance.

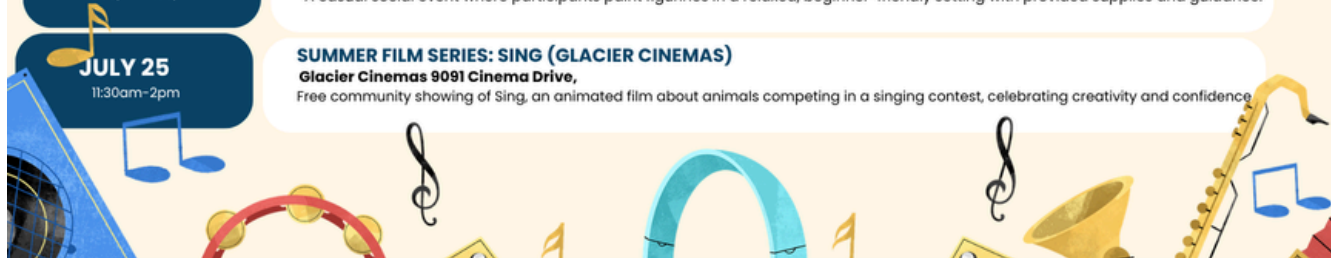
JULY 25

11:30am-2pm

SUMMER FILM SERIES: SING (GLACIER CINEMAS)

Glacier Cinemas 9091 Cinema Drive,

Free community showing of Sing, an animated film about animals competing in a singing contest, celebrating creativity and confidence.





WILD IN JUNEAU: BEAR AWARE, TRAIL READY, SUMMER SAFE

Summer in Juneau is a time to get outside, explore, and enjoy the beauty of Southeast Alaska. From forest trails to coastal views, nature is always close by and so are the wildlife that call this place home. Staying aware and prepared helps keep both people and animals safe.

Bear Aware: What Locals Should Remember

Bears are active throughout Juneau during the summer months, especially as they search for food.

To stay safe:

- Make noise while walking or hiking to avoid surprising a bear
- Stay alert for tracks, scat, or signs of disturbed areas
- Keep dogs on a leash and under control
- Carry bear spray and know how to use it before you head out
- Never approach or feed bears, even from a distance

If you encounter a bear, stay calm. Do not run. Slowly back away while keeping the bear in view and giving it space to move on

Trail Ready: Be Prepared Before You Go

Whether it's a short neighborhood walk or a backcountry adventure, a little preparation goes a long way.

Before heading out:

- Check weather conditions and trail updates
- Let someone know your route and expected return time
- Bring water, snacks, and extra layers
- Carry a charged phone and a basic first aid kit
- Stay on marked trails whenever possible

Even familiar paths can change quickly with weather, tides, and wildlife activity.

Summer Safe: Sharing the Outdoors Responsibly

Juneau's natural environment is incredible but it depends on respect and awareness from everyone who enjoys it.

- Keep a safe distance from all wildlife, including deer, eagles, and goats
- Secure food and trash to avoid attracting animals
- Supervise children closely in outdoor spaces
- Be cautious near rivers, beaches, and shorelines where conditions can change quickly

A Shared Responsibility:

Living in Juneau means sharing space with wildlife every day. Small actions like securing food, staying alert on trails, and respecting animal space help protect our community and preserve the natural environment that makes Southeast Alaska so special.



SCAN ME



Stay informed. Stay connected. Subscribe to the Reach AK newsletter today.



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213 3rd Street, Juneau, Alaska 99801