

# ANNUAL REPORT

THE FUTURE OF BELONGING STARTS HERE



**40**th COMMUNITY  
PROVIDER NETWORK  
OF RHODE ISLAND

# BUILDING A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE

B E L O N G S



# OUR WORK



# CPNRI MEMBERS

## ADULT SERVICES

 Action Based Enterprises (ABE)	 L.I.F.E. Inc.
 Arc of Blackstone Valley	 Living Innovations
 Avatar	 Opportunities Unlimited
 Community Residences, Inc.	 Project Friends
 Corliss Institute	 ReFocus, Inc.
 Gateways to Change	 spurwink   RI
 James L. Maher Center	 West Bay RI
 Justice Resource Institute	 Whitmarsh House

## CHILDREN SERVICES

 Children's Friend	 Navigate Behaviors
 Family Behavior Solutions	 Northeast Family Services
 Family Service of RI	 Ocean State Behavioral
 Meaningful Outcomes	 The Autism Project
 Momentum, Inc.	



20,000+  
PEOPLE SUPPORTED

## ADULT & CHILDREN SERVICES

 AccessPoint RI
 J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center
 Looking Upwards
 Perspectives Corporation
 proABILITY / The Arc of Bristol
 Seven Hills RI
 The Groden Network
 The Fogarty Center
 The Olean Center
 United Cerebral Palsy RI

"What they do simply works."

-The Groden Network Parent

# EMPOWERING LIVES SINCE 1985



## 1985

RI announces closure of its state institution: The Ladd School

## 1985

CPNRI (under the name OSARR) is formed

## 1992

CPNRI hosts first legislative event

## 1998

CPNRI Members advocating in Washington, DC

## 1998

Working with RI Board of Elections to get people registered to vote

## 2000

CPNRI members are collectively the 9th largest employer in the state

## 1985 - 1994

## 1995 - 2004

## 2005

OSARR changes name to CPNRI

## 2005

State House rally against budget cuts

## 2010

Working to end the use of the R-word

## 2005 - 2014

## 2018

Stopping statewide funding cuts to disability services

## 2022

RI passes historic funding model for disability services

## 2025

CPNRI celebrates 40 years of leadership

## 2015 - 2025

# DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL CELEBRATION



Every day, thousands of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) empower people with disabilities. During this community's **37th annual celebration**, we honored 42 DSPs of the Year with over 400 people in attendance.

 **FOGARTY**

This celebration was presented by **The John E. Fogarty Foundation** and a total of six sponsors (pages 16 & 17).



**"Thank you for making me feel so special. This event made me proud to be a DSP."**

**- Lori Rinkel,  
James L. Maher Center DSP**

# CREATING A FUTURE FOR EVERYONE

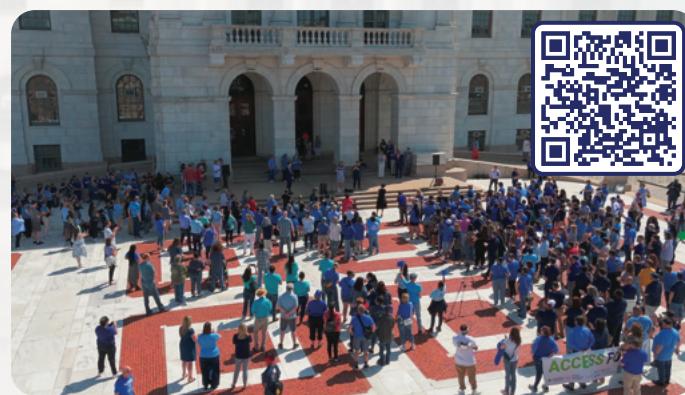
## RI CREATES ALERT FOR MISSING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Our State became the 6th in the country to create a new statewide alert system for missing people with disabilities. The bill was quickly passed with bipartisan support.



## 300+ ADVOCATES RALLY FOR DISABILITY RIGHTS

Advocates, families and community leaders came together at the State House to protect access to care and defend rights for all Rhode Islanders. Watch the day by scanning this QR code.



## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

As a community, we sent hundreds of emails to lawmakers, held one-on-one meetings with lawmakers and built connections. This community is steadily growing its influence at the State House to create a better RI for everyone.



# BUILDING THE FUTURE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

## 2025 Health and Human Services Conference

In November, CPNRI's annual conference brought together Health and Human Service professionals from across New England to learn, connect and move the field forward. For people who pour so much time and energy into supporting other people, this day gave a space to pause, connect and think boldly about the future.



**350+**

Attendees



**18**

Sessions



**12**

Speakers



**4.58**

Rating out of 5

Funded by

**DLT**  
Department of Labor and Training  
RHODE ISLAND



# CPNRI TEAM



**Tina Spears**  
Executive  
Director



**Nick Friend**  
Communications  
Director



**Ray Memery**  
President



**Carrie Miranda**  
Vice President



**Marissa Ruff**  
Secretary



**Grace Duffy**  
Policy & Outreach  
Manager



**Doreen McConaghy**  
Pooled Trust  
Coordinator



**Casey Gartland**  
Treasurer



**Katherine Brinkman**  
Member At-Large

*Not Pictured: Dan Ward, Member At-Large*

# THANK YOU SPONSORS

*The partners that strengthen the disability community.*



Where Each Relationship Matters®



# LEADERSHIP TEAM

# ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY

CPNRI and the Rhode Island Department of Labor & Training completed the fourth year of our partnership. Together, we have two goals:

Empowering people with disabilities to get employed.

Retaining and training frontline staff at provider agencies.

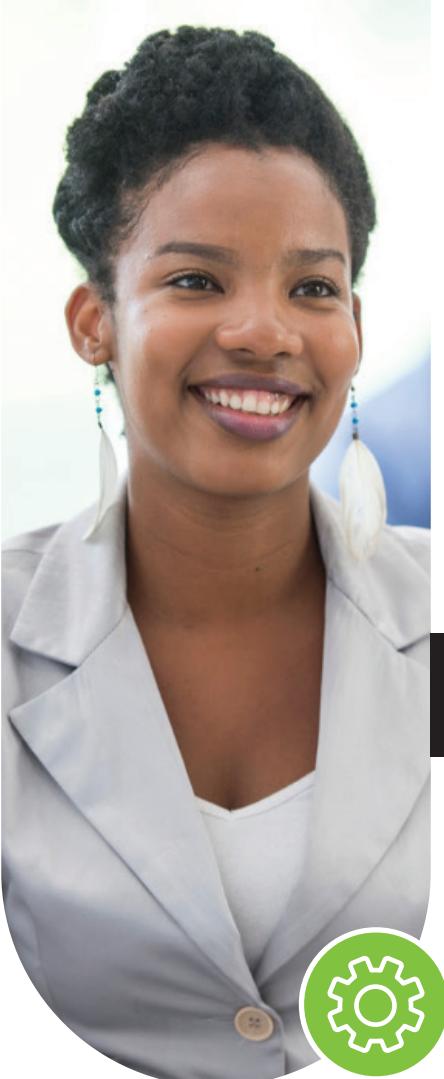
## Results in Total



People who received job training

People with a disability that got a job

Frontline staff that received valuable training



### Hiring PCAs

What if people with disabilities were hired to support people with disabilities? **Looking Upwards** brings that vision to life.



### Owning a Business

Starting your own business is challenging and rewarding. The **Rhode Island Developmental Disabilities Council** empowers people to learn, create a plan and bring that business to life.



### Finding the Right Fit

Everyone can make a great employee if given the right support. **Skills for Rhode Island's Future workABILITY** initiative matches employees and employers.



### Frontline Staff Training

Training and community leads to better staff retention. The **University of Minnesota**, brought this to staff through trainings that resulted in workplace improvements.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# STORIES FROM THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY



## Art by People with Disabilities

"It makes you feel good inside when people like the rugs and scarves we make."

-Mary, Artist



## The Imagine Walk For Autism

"It's a place where we feel a part of something, we belong here. It's a sense of community."

-Parent



## Earning a Job at Home Depot

"I love to water flowers. I love my job. I get paid for it."

-Brenda, Home Depot Associate



We believe in a world where everyone belongs. That can only happen when we empower voices to show what a welcoming world looks like. Through storytelling, people don't just learn about disability, they see what our future can look like. CPNRI has become a leader among trade associations on social media, email marketing, video production and our website.

# STORY OF THE YEAR



## 'Human, Too'

is a poem about belonging written by Brenda Wilkinson, a poet and artist with a disability.

In just two minutes, she challenges us to open our hearts and look at the humanity in each other.



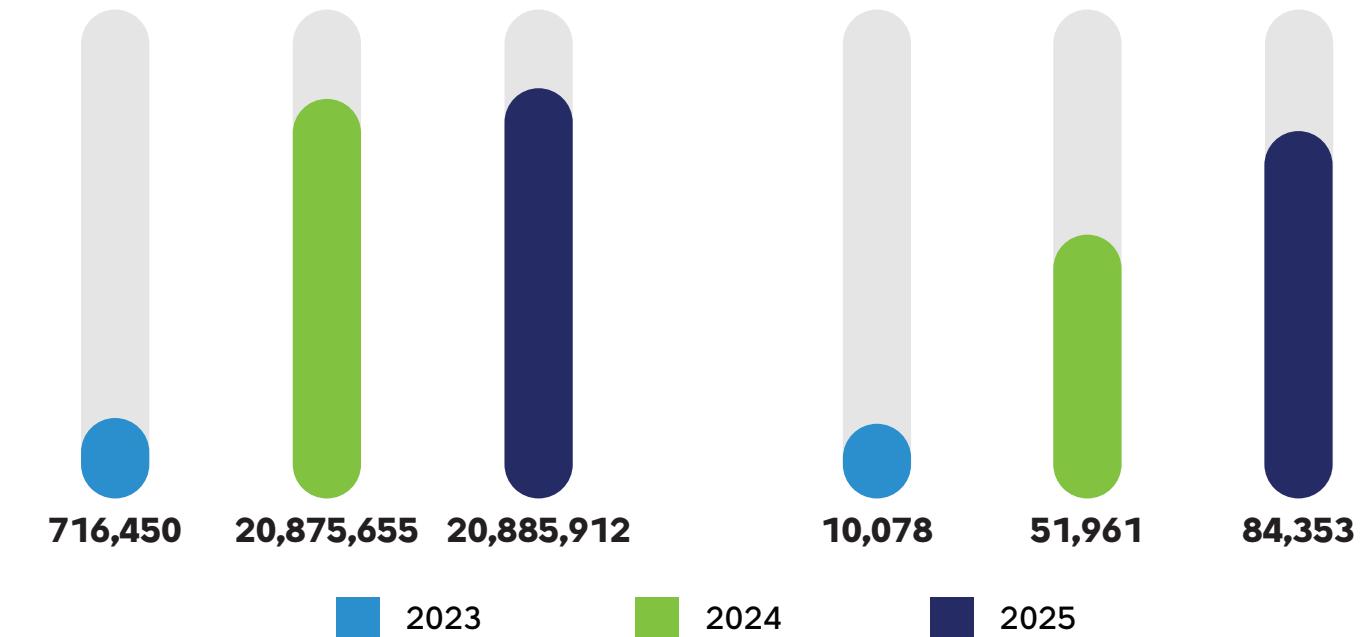
# THE IMPACT

**20,885,912**

Social Media Impressions

**84,353**

Website Views



# 2026 BUILDING A FUTURE TOGETHER

## A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### ADVOCACY

Legislation for the 2026 session is already underway. Priorities will include accessible housing and funding for services.



### WORKFORCE

Rhode Island is a national leader in disability workforce development. We will continue training of all staff levels through professional development, celebration and more.



**Tina Spears**  
Executive Director

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For 40 years, CPNRI has stood for advocacy, service and an unwavering commitment to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Turning 40 often comes with jokes like middle-aged, over the hill or life begins at 40. But when I think about what 40 means for CPNRI, one thing is clear: We are just getting started.

These four decades represent hard work and progress. Above all, we have learned and grown together. CPNRI was founded by individuals who refused to conform. At a time when many did not believe in opportunity or community for all, they chose a different path rooted in dignity, inclusion and belonging. The belief that all people belong remains our foundation.

Today, CPNRI stands on strong footing, ready to take on new opportunities and determined to protect the progress built by the many dedicated individuals who came before us. As we enter 2026, we do so with the same tenacity and resolve that brought us here. We are united by the belief that all people belong, today, tomorrow and always!

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### STORIES

The disability community has stories that deserve to be seen, heard and valued. We will continue to elevate these in 2026.

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**Building a world where everyone belongs.**

Will you join us?



@CPNRI