



# The Connector

**SPEAKING UP FOR US  
OF MAINE**

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## May 2022 Newsletter

Hello to our self-advocates, supporters, and allies! We are excited to share what self-advocates and SUFU Staff have been up to this past month. From seeing each other face to face at our coffee and conversation time, learning about self-directed services, inviting people to our leadership training and planning our upcoming roundups!

In addition, the team decided to start sending out a weekly happenings email. This will provide information as to what meetings are happening when and what time each week. If you would like to sign up for that please email [info@sufumaine.org](mailto:info@sufumaine.org)



## Coffee and Conversation

Our chapters recently were able to meet face to face for coffee! Stacy and Laurie were able to meet with almost everyone and they both drank a lot of coffee! We asked Stacy to share her experience in meeting people.

I started at SUFU exactly 1 year ago on May 5<sup>th</sup> and finally I was able to hit the road and set out on a new adventure to meet members face to face. I felt like it was

my first day of school since I was sporting a shiny new binder filled with June 8<sup>th</sup> Presque Isle Round up Flyers, registration forms and attendance sheets.

My first stop was Houlton and we got to know each other as we chatted over coffee. We discussed where folks are working and offered advice to one member who was looking for something very specific for trade learning and employment.

Later, that day I met with Central Aroostook members in Presque Isle and wow what a nice turn out. I saw experienced members, new members and even returning members. I think every one of them filled out a registration form, then and there, for the June 8<sup>th</sup> Presque Isle Round up.

I headed out the next morning to meet with Northern Aroostook members in Caribou and guess what? Surprise! Monique arrived. She had rearranged her busy schedule to sip some coffee and nibble a doughnut while she shared her visions of the June 8<sup>th</sup> Presque Isle Round-up. We chatted about our SUFU summer and fall plans, swapped some funny stories and before you know it our time ended.

I headed back to the office where I refilled my binder with more registration forms since lots of folks have signed up to the June 8<sup>th</sup> Presque Isle Round-up. Thursday was a big day, and I was traveling to Millinocket and Lincoln an area of Maine that I have never explored. I don't know why, because that area, Penobscot County is beautiful. Mount Katahdin is still snowcapped, and the trees are a brilliant spring green. I met with a board member, one returning member and one potential member at the Appalachian Trail Café. During my visit we talked about Reagan's seat on the board, area services and Bobby shared his dream to eventually live, independently, in his very own place. See the above photo of Reagan and Bobby. The time went fast, and I was off to Lincoln. where I met another board member and another new member. We got busy discussing and planning our next in person meeting. We talk about the possibilities and community places we could meet and have a picnic. We must set a date for that soon. All in all, what a wonderful experience, to finally meet the faces of self-advocates and their support staff. I've met members that have been involved with SUFU longer than records show and folk that have come to see what SUFU is about. All are welcome and I look forward to seeing what the SUFU members can accomplish in my next year here at SUFU. Thank you, I sure am blessed to be part of such an amazing group.

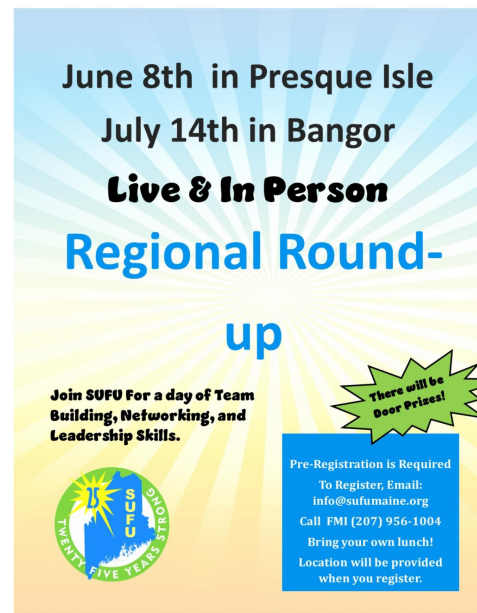
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### **Regional Round-Ups!**

The SUFU Round Up's are coming back! We are planning one in Aroostook County for June 8<sup>th</sup>. July 14<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting one in the Bangor area and October 12<sup>th</sup> we will be in Southern Maine! We look forward to seeing you!

To register for the round-up closest to you please email [info@sufumaine.org](mailto:info@sufumaine.org) or click on the name of the area you want to register for below!

- [Aroostook County](#)
- [Bangor](#)



June 8<sup>th</sup> in Presque Isle  
July 14<sup>th</sup> in Bangor  
**Live & In Person**  
**Regional Round-up**

Join SUFU For a day of Team Building, Networking, and Leadership Skills.

There will be Door Prizes!

Pre-Registration is Required  
To Register, Email:  
[info@sufumaine.org](mailto:info@sufumaine.org)  
Call FMI (207) 956-1004  
Bring your own lunch!  
Location will be provided when you register.

2020  
SUFU  
FIVE YEARS STRONG

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### **Jon's Corner**

Hi to all the Members out there!

I love the Video on What is Self-Advocacy that we watched at our Central Maine Chapter. The people they interviewed said their answers about the questions that was on the screen and then we took time to answer the questions ourselves. I recently went to a SARTAC meeting, and we had 36 people that were there. We talked about Intersectionality and there was a lot of information that we got. I learned some things from the meeting.

We are still accepting applications to our leadership program. The Leadership Program starts in June 2022. If you want an application email me at [jmcgovern@sufumaine.org](mailto:jmcgovern@sufumaine.org)

We had our coffee and conversation time last week. Our group met in the park in Bangor. We had some new individuals join us and that was great. We are doing a round up in July in Bangor and we hope that more individuals join us for that! That will take place on July 14<sup>th</sup>. To register please visit our registration page.

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## **Kile's Corner**

Hi to all the members!

How are you doing today? This is Kile with a another a Corner.

This month has been a busy month. This is what Monique and I have been working on. We went to a conference that was for Provider agencies and I was one of the people chosen that has lived experience to give input.

We talked about how this new service would be happening and called Self-Direction.

A service that people would have more chances to make the decisions about their own life, like to hire or fire their own staff. To choose tasks that staff can do to make everyday life easy for people with disabilities. A Broker will work with the self-advocate the staff and case workers to set a fair wage. Documentation will also be made easier for staff.

Attending the Provider Agencies Conference was a good experience like to see what agencies are thinking about the new service that will soon come to Maine.

It was a good meeting an old friend and meeting new people.

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## **Leadership Training**

Speaking Up For Us is still accepting applications for its upcoming Leadership Training dates. If you are a self-advocate or you know one that could benefit from this time please email [Jon McGovern](#) or [Laurie Coldwell](#) for an application.





*"For a long time, people told me what they thought I couldn't do. Being part of the Leadership Program has given me the opportunity to learn skills that can help others and to learn from other people too!"*

– Mary Ann

*"Everyone should be able to set goals for themselves and make a conscious effort to achieve them. It's part of what makes us all human. I hope that my experience inspires other people like me to aim high for what they want in life."*

-Marco



## Speaking Up for Us Leadership Development Program

The SUFU Leadership Development Program has been training future leaders from our membership for several years. Members participate in a 3 day program learning skills and building confidence to be a leader in their community.

### Be Nominated Today!

Nominations will be accepted until May 5th. Please include the name, mailing address, phone number and email of the person nominated. A cost of \$15 for members and \$25 for non members must be included with completed applications. Applications will be reviewed and approved for acceptance. Some applicants may not be accepted to the program based on information provided and/or space. Applications are due by May 15th.

To learn more about SUFU, please visit our website:

[sufumaine.org](http://sufumaine.org)

## Great News!!

You can be nominated  
for the Leadership  
Development Program!

### 2022 Dates:

June 15, July 20 &  
August 17

\*Participants must  
commit to attending all  
3 dates.

### Submit Nominations:

Speaking up for Us

PO Box 4139

Presque Isle, ME 04769

[sufumaine.org](http://sufumaine.org)

Call Laurie Coldwell

[lcoldwell@sufumaine.org](mailto:lcoldwell@sufumaine.org)

(207) 956-1004

### What's on the blog?

Our Blog is a space where Self-Advocates share their stories. We invite you to check them out [here](#).

If you are a self-advocate that would like to submit an entry for our blog please reach out to [Laurie Coldwell](#) or [Jon McGovern](#).



## Finally

We invite you to check out our [website](#). Read our most recent [blog post](#) and subscribe to future blogs. You can also find the list of our chapter meetings, or follow us on [Facebook](#). If you are a SUFU member we want you to join our members only Facebook Group. To do that please email [Laurie Coldwell](#) or [Jon McGovern](#). We don't want you to miss anything.



Have an Idea for Something to be in The Connector?

Contact: Laurie Coldwell

Program Manager (207) 956-1004 / Ext. 4

**[lcoldwell@sufumaine.org](mailto:lcoldwell@sufumaine.org)**

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